INDRAJIT GUPTA IN PARLIAMENT

A Commemorative Volume

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

Shri Indrajit Gupta was an illustrious leader who left an indelible impress of his multi-faceted personality on our country's political and parliamentary firmament. An outstanding parliamentarian, he was an epitome of sincerity, social and intellectual sensitivity, integrity and scholarship who commanded great respect across the political spectrum. A committed leader of the Communist movement in the country, he forcefully articulated the trials and tribulations of the poor and the deprived. His abiding concern for the under-privileged, his ceaseless campaigns against the scourge of poverty, and his relentless crusade for the removal of socio-economic inequalities endeared him to the teeming masses.

Shri Indrajit Gupta had one of the longest terms as a parliamentarian. Starting 1960 till his death in 2001, except for a brief interregnum, he adorned the hallowed Benches of the Lok Sabha with great distinction. As an Opposition stalwart, he spoke eloquently on a wide array of issues of national and international concern. Between 1996 and 1998, he was the Union Minister of Home Affairs, in which capacity he addressed many issues relating to national welfare and security. His speeches in Parliament provide a critical analysis of national and international issues spread over a period of nearly four eventful decades. Ranging from the travails of the working class, trade union movement, importance of developing a sound infrastructure base, through education, health care, agriculture, imperative of self-reliance, and science and technology, to secularism, constitutional matters, Indian economy, defence, India's relations with other countries, and international issues, Indrajit Gupta spoke with a rare conviction and authority which resonated inside the Chambers of Parliament and outside of it. His outstanding speeches are a mine of information on the issues of the times and provide a deep insight into the myriad themes that he dwelt upon.

This Monograph, brought out by the Lok Sabha Secretariat, brings together some of the important speeches delivered by Shri Indrajit Gupta in Parliament. The speeches included in the Commemorative Volume not only testify to Indrajit Gupta's intellectual prowess and wide range of interests but also his oratorical skill and analytical excellence. As such, this Monograph will be of great value to parliamentarians, political scientists, research scholars and other interested readers.

Price : Rs. 1400.00

INDRAJIT GUPTA IN PARLIAMENT
A COMMEMORATIVE VOLUME

INDRAJIT GUPTA IN PARLIAMENT
A COMMEMORATIVE VOLUME

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

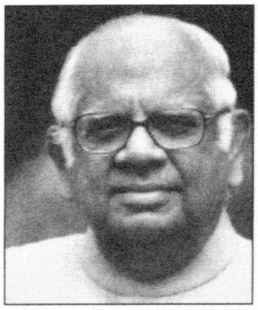
2007

12(1)-PRIS (Parly.)/2007

© Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2007

Price : Rs. 1400.00

Published under Rule 382 of the *Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha* (Eleventh Edition) and printed by Jainco Art India, 13/10, W.E.A., Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110 005.



सत्यमेव जयते

अध्यक्ष, लोक सभा
SPEAKER, LOK SABHA

FOREWORD

Shri Indrajit Gupta was an outstanding leader of modern India who occupied a distinctly pre-eminent position in the annals of our parliamentary democratic life. A versatile parliamentarian, powerful communicator, accomplished administrator and a respected mass leader, he played a pioneering role in the Communist movement and also in shaping and moulding the country's trade union movement. Throughout his long years of public life, he was identified with the progressive political forces in the country always championing the rights and the fundamental freedoms of the people, particularly of the poor and the working class. Shri Indrajit Gupta was indeed a many-splendoured personality.

Shri Indrajit Gupta was associated with the supreme representative institution of India for nearly four decades. He entered the Second Lok Sabha in a by-election in 1960 and continued to be a member almost without break till 2001, except for the brief interregnum between 1977 and 1980. Thus, he had the distinction of serving as many as eleven terms in the Lok Sabha. His continuous membership of the Parliament for such a long span of time is verily a testimony to the high esteem in which the people held him. Being the senior-most member of the Lok Sabha, Shri Indrajit Gupta was popularly known as the 'Father of House'; he also adorned the office of the Speaker, *pro tem* of Lok Sabha four times—in 1991, 1996, 1998 and 1999. He was a distinguished member and Chairman of several important Parliamentary Committees as well, where again he contributed greatly with his sane counsel.

Through a distinguished public life spanning many decades, Shri Indrajit Gupta rendered outstanding services towards helping to build an inclusive, secular, rational, progressive and prosperous India. His long association with the Communist Party and the trade union movement afforded him an opportunity to have a deep insight into and a direct experience of the various

problems faced by the working class as also the poor and the deprived. It was this sensitivity to the plight of the working class in general, and the vulnerable sections in particular, that greatly influenced his political outlook.

All these singular attributes of Shri Indrajit Gupta found profound expression in his parliamentary and public life. Shri Indrajit Gupta was a parliamentarian *non pareil* and a master of parliamentary practices and procedures. He was a mesmerizing orator. He had a remarkable talent for making the right use of parliamentary devices to articulate the aspirations and concerns of the man on the street. His perceptive understanding of various procedural mechanisms available to members enabled him to utilize them in a very productive manner. His exceptional performance as a parliamentarian remained one of the distinguishing features of his public life which influenced the Government in no small measure in critically reflecting on its many policies, programmes and implementation strategies.

Parliamentarians, cutting across political parties, looked up to Shri Indrajit Gupta with reverence, as a friend, philosopher and guide. He always showed special respect to the Chair and scrupulously followed parliamentary conventions and etiquette. He enriched our parliamentary proceedings and debates with his passionate espousal of public causes, his remarkable eloquence and subtle and penetrating wit. Though he missed no opportunity in pointing out the Government's shortcomings and inadequacies, he made constructive and positive contribution towards nation-building. Even while he was critical of issues, he always tempered his criticism with constructive cooperation. Through his balanced and unruffled temperament and dignified demeanour, he lent a rare grace and dignity to our parliamentary proceedings.

Shri Indrajit Gupta came to Parliament as one of the well-established leaders of the masses and by his selfless service and his varied contributions, he earned the respect of all sections of the House irrespective of their ideological affiliations. When I entered Parliament in 1971, Shri Indrajit Gupta had already established himself as one of the finest parliamentarians in the country. I had the good fortune of watching him lead many discussions in Parliament. We looked up to him for inspiration and he was ever forthcoming with his invaluable advice and suggestions about our parliamentary responsibilities and duties. Personally, I was extremely fortunate in enjoying his guidance and affection in abundance.

Shri Indrajit Gupta showed us light; he showed us direction, and whenever there was any occasion when we could not decide what to do, he was there to guide us. What left an indelible imprint on our minds was his abiding commitment to the highest traditions of parliamentary democracy. His concern and devotion to the establishment of a just, rational and egalitarian society also left a deep imprint on our minds. Like others, I was also immensely

impressed by his scholarship, simplicity, reasoned arguments and commitment to the ethical values and principles. When he spoke in Parliament, there was pin drop silence, and he could enthrall the House with his profound wisdom permeated by his insightful grassroots experience. He spoke with a rare conviction, borne out of his scholarship, close association with the working class, and a sensitive approach to socio-economic and political issues. His speeches in Parliament covered almost every conceivable subject of topical concern and he made every effort to study the problems in depth. That is why members used to throng the Chambers when they came to know that Shri Indrajit Gupta would be speaking in the House. As the Union Minister of Home Affairs during 1996-1998, he brought in a refreshing change in governmental functioning. Indeed, Shri Indrajit Gupta stood tall, head and shoulders above his peers and contemporaries and would have done proud as a parliamentarian anywhere in the parliamentary fraternity.

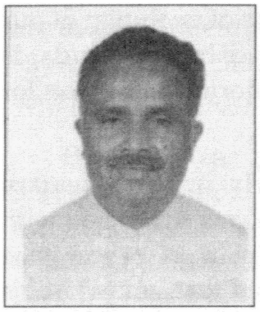
As a principled parliamentarian, Shri Indrajit Gupta was deeply disturbed about the discouraging tendencies in our political and parliamentary life. He was greatly concerned that the precious parliamentary time was at times wasted in disruption and disorder. He pleaded with all stakeholders with all the moral force at his command to ensure the smooth and orderly conduct of the business of the House. If we heed his sage counsel, that would perhaps be the best tribute the parliamentary community could pay to this distinguished parliamentarian. Our Parliament cannot be expected to function as an effective forum articulating the problems of the people, in the process, helping to reinforce democratic values in the country, unless everyone associated with it demonstrates a culture of tolerance and use it as a forum for discussion and debate.

This publication, brought out by the Lok Sabha Secretariat, attempts to bring out the various dimensions of Shri Indrajit Gupta's multifaceted personality and highlights his contributions in strengthening the parliamentary institutions through a representative selection of his important speeches in Parliament. I compliment the Secretary-General, Lok Sabha, Shri P.D.T. Achary, and his team of officers, for bringing out this publication which throws light on the issues of the times as seen through the eyes of a parliamentarian par excellence. I am sure, this will be found informative and useful by parliamentarians, political scientists and students of modern Indian parliamentary history.

Somnath Chatterjee

New Delhi
20 June 2007

SOMNATH CHATTERJEE
Speaker, Lok Sabha



सत्यमेव जयते

SECRETARY-GENERAL,
LOK SABHA

PREFACE

This Monograph is a humble attempt by us to project, with all our limitations, the legendary Indrajit Gupta and his contributions to the institution of Parliament. It contains articles reflecting the opinions of eminent leaders many of whom were his colleagues as well as his own speeches in Parliament. We have published a number of Monographs on eminent Parliamentarians which have been well-received. I am sure the political class and the reading public will welcome this publication.

Shri Indrajit Gupta was a powerful voice heard in the Chambers of Indian Parliament for over four decades, a voice every member of Indian Parliament always loved to hear. A debator of extraordinary skill and charm he could always attract a full House which is a rare feat. Any debate in the House in which he took part there was an 'Indrajit Gupta effect' which always elevated the mood of the House. His logic was so powerful that it would deeply penetrate even the most impenetrable minds and when he ends his speech there would be a visible consensual mood around his point of view. Such was the impact of Shri Indrajit Gupta's speeches in the House. An orator par excellence but one who uses simple language without great literary flourishes Shri Indrajit Gupta could always articulate clearly the most sensible view on a subject. His speeches in the House on defence and external affairs in particular were so profound that these will provide us a deep insight into the issues relating to the defence of the country and its foreign policy in the difficult and eventful days in the early seventies.

Shri Indrajit Gupta was a role model for Parliamentarians. His conduct in the House reflected his innate dignity and his very genuine concern for upholding the normative standards of behaviour in the House. He represented a Parliamentary culture the hallmark of which was respect for the Chair and respect for the great traditions of the House. While being a part of this culture

he enriched it by his conduct. Perhaps in the long process of evolution of our democracy the paradigms of conduct may undergo changes but the standards laid down by these great men should always define the norms of conduct for Parliamentarians.

I have had occasions to work with him, particularly, in Parliamentary Committees. I used to visit him in the hospital where he was struggling with life. Even when he was suffering from unbearable pain as cancer was destroying the life force, he remained calm and it seemed that he had in his own dignified way come to terms with the inexorable reality of human life.

The Indian Parliament became poorer by his death. This thought, shared by all, was amply reflected in the expressions of grief which followed his death. A brilliant person with an incisive intellect whose powerful voice reverberated in the Chambers of Indian Parliament for four decades and who articulated in the most authentic way the concerns of the masses, Shri Indrajit Gupta will be remembered always by his countrymen. We salute the memory of this great Parliamentarian of all times.

We were privileged to receive Messages from several national leaders for the success of this endeavour. We are deeply beholden to the Hon'ble President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam; Hon'ble Vice-President and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat; Hon'ble Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh; former Prime Ministers, Shri V.P. Singh, Shri Chandra Shekhar and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee; Union Minister of Rural Development, Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh; Leader of the Opposition, Rajya Sabha, Shri Jaswant Singh; Governor, Madhya Pradesh, Dr. Bal Ram Jakhar; Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri K. Rahman Khan; Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha, Shri Charnjit Singh Atwal; Dr. Karan Singh and Shri K. Yerrannaidu, both Members of Parliament; and Shri Jyoti Basu, former Chief Minister of West Bengal, for sending Messages for this commemorative volume.

The Monograph is divided into four Parts. Part I carries a Profile of Shri Indrajit Gupta and Part II incorporates eleven Articles, delving into the various facets of Shri Indrajit Gupta's public life, contributed by his contemporaries. The distinguished contributors to this volume are: Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Union Minister for External Affairs; Prof. Saifuddin Soz, Union Minister of Water Resources; Shri Manohar Joshi, MP and former Speaker of Lok Sabha; Shri Rupchand Pal, Shri Ajay Chakraborty and Shri Prabodh Panda, all Members of Parliament; Shri B.R. Bhagat, former Speaker of Lok Sabha; Shri Narayan Datt Tiwari, former Chief Minister of Uttarakhand; Shri Chaturanan Mishra, former Union Minister of Agriculture; Dr. L.M. Singhvi, former Member of Parliament and former High Commissioner of India in UK; and Shri A.B. Bardhan, General Secretary, Communist Party of India. We

are indeed grateful to all these dignitaries, many of whom have been closely associated with Shri Indrajit Gupta for contributing the Articles which have undoubtedly enriched this publication.

Part III of the publication brings together a representative selection of Shri Indrajit Gupta's speeches in Parliament. We have made every effort to include speeches covering a cross-section of issues of national importance which he delivered on the floor of the Lok Sabha covering the nearly four decades when he was a member. We have also included some speeches delivered by him in the Rajya Sabha when he was the Union Minister of Home Affairs between 1996 and 1998. The speeches in this section are a testimony to his intellectual acumen, oratorical skill and his deep interest in a variety of subjects.

Part IV of the Monograph contains Addresses delivered on the occasion of the conferment of the first Bharat Ratna Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Outstanding Parliamentarian Award on Shri Indrajit Gupta in the year 1992. This section also includes tributes paid to Shri Indrajit Gupta in both the Houses of Parliament on his passing away on 20 February 2001. A list of all speeches delivered by Shri Indrajit Gupta in Parliament is included in the volume so as to facilitate easy access to his speeches in Parliament by interested readers. A comprehensive Index also finds place in Part IV of the publication. Besides, the Monograph carries select photographs covering Shri Indrajit Gupta's public and parliamentary life.

We are greatly indebted to the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, for his inspiring guidance in bringing out this Monograph and for his very enlightening Foreword to the publication.

I take this opportunity to thank the officers such as Shri M. Rajagopalan Nair, Additional Secretary, Shri K. Vijayakrishnan, Joint Secretary, and many other officers and staff of the Research and Information Division who helped in bringing out this Monograph.

I am sure, this Monograph on Shri Indrajit Gupta will be found useful and informative by parliamentarians, academics, researchers and other interested readers.

New Delhi
April 2007

P.D.T. ACHARY,
Secretary-General, Lok Sabha

CONTENTS

PAGE NOS.

FOREWORD ..... (i)

PREFACE ..... (v)

MESSAGES ..... (xv)

ABBREVIATIONS ..... (xxxi)

PART-I

PROFILE 1

PART-II

ARTICLES

Indrajit Gupta : Trade Unionist, Leader and Parliamentarian
(Pranab Mukherjee) 9

Indrajit Gupta : A Great Parliamentarian
(Saifuddin Soz) 11

Indrajit Gupta : A Great Human Being
(Manohar Joshi) 13

Fatherly Indrajit : The Voice of the Downtrodden
(Rupchand Pal) 16

Comrade Indrajit Gupta : An Undaunted Fighter
(Ajay Chakraborty) 19

Real Tribune of the People
(Prabodh Panda) 23

Indrajit Gupta : An Incredible Communist with Intense Humanism
(B.R. Bhagat) 26

Father of the House
(Narayan Datt Tiwari) 30

Indrajit Gupta as I Knew Him
(Chaturanan Mishra) 32

Indrajit Gupta : An Exceptionally Gifted Parliamentarian
(L.M. Singhvi) 34

Indrajit Gupta : An Outstanding Leader of the Masses
(A.B. Bardhan) 36

PAGE NOS.

PART-III

SELECT SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT

PARLIAMENTARY AND POLITICAL ISSUES

The Freedom Fighters (Appreciation of Services) Bill, 1971 ... 45

The Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1975 ... 51

The Constitution (Sixty-second Amendment) Bill, 1988 and the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 1988 ... 56

The Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Bill, 2000 ... 64

Vote of Confidence in the Council of Ministers ... 66

Commitment to Secularism ... 79

Presidential Proclamation under Article 356 ... 86

Need for a Solution to the Crisis in Assam ... 95

On the Situation in Jammu and Kashmir ... 103

National Consensus on Jammu and Kashmir ... 110

The Crisis in Jammu and Kashmir ... 117

INTERNAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

Optimum Utilization of the Defence Allocation ... 127

The Police Forces (Restriction of Rights) Bill, 1966 ... 130

The Private Security Guards and Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 1994 ... 135

The Preventive Detention (Continuance) Bill, 1966 ... 137

The Defence of India Bill, 1971 ... 143

The National Security Bill, 1980 ... 148

On the Punjab Problem ... 151

On the Alarming Situation in Punjab ... 158

For a Peaceful Settlement in Punjab ... 166

Deterioration in Law and Order ... 174

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

A Strong Public Sector for a Strong Economy ... 187

Role of Public Sector Enterprises in the National Economy ... 192

Self-reliance in Oil Production ... 196

On the Disinvestment Policy of the Government ... 200

General Budget and the Common Man ... 208

PAGE NOS.

Budget must Address the Common Man's Concerns 219

Controlling Rise in Prices of Essential Commodities 229

Rise in Prices : A Matter of Serious Concern 234

Imperative of Nationalisation of Banks 250

The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1967 255

The Public Financial Institutions Law (Amendment) Bill, 1975 263

The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (Amendment) Bill, 1988 270

The International Monetary Fund and Bank (Amendment) Bill, 1982 276

SOCIAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

The Constitution (Twenty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 1971 285

On Reservation of Jobs for Depressed Classes 293

On Mandal Commission Recommendations 299

On Mandal Commission Report and Social Justice 308

On Empowerment of Women 314

Development Boards in Maharashtra and Gujarat 328

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND WORKERS' WELFARE

The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Amendment Bill, 1960 335

The Minimum Wages (Amendment) Bill, 1961 343

The Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 1963 350

The Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 1963 358

The Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Bill, 1964 364

The Industrial (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 1971 367

The Central Industrial Security Force (Amendment) Bill, 1983 372

The Essential Services Maintenance (Amendment) Bill, 1985 377

Representative Character of Trade Unions 380

The Travails of Jute Mill Workers 384

The Plight of Tobacco Growers 391

PAGE NOS.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

On Farmers' Interests 399

Alarming Drought Situation 406

Long Term Measures for Drought Relief 415

Grim Food Security Scenario 421

Strengthening the Public Distribution System 425

BILATERAL AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

On Indo-Pak Agreement on the Gujarat-West Pakistan Border 433

On the Indus Water Treaty and its Provisions 443

Indo-Pak Border Security Concerns 452

Promoting Good Neighbourly Relations 456

Foreign Policy and Our National Interest 463

Alarming International Situation 472

Promoting a Peaceful World Order 478

The Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Bill, 1976 484

The Crusade against Apartheid 491

Using Nuclear Technology for Peace 494

On India's Nuclear Policy 499

PART-IV

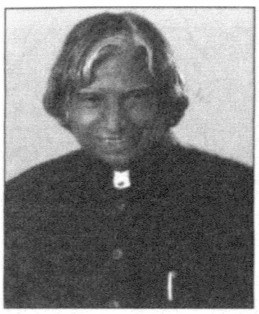
ADDRESSES AT THE CONFERMENT OF THE BHARAT RATNA PANDIT GOVIND BALLABH PANT OUTSTANDING PARLIAMENTARIAN AWARD ON SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA 509

TRIBUTES PAID TO SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA IN PARLIAMENT 514

LIST OF SPEECHES/STATEMENTS BY SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA IN PARLIAMENT 527

INDEX 609

MESSAGES



सत्यमेव जयते

राष्ट्रपति
भारत गणतंत्र
PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF INDIA

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that the Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out a Monograph on the late Shri Indrajit Gupta.

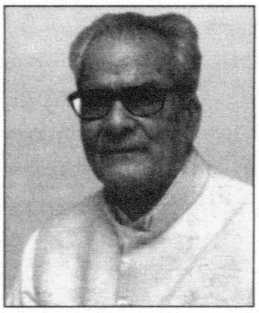
Shri Indrajit Gupta was a great leader and a social worker who was a member of Parliament on numerous occasions. His contribution to the political arena will always be remembered, especially as a leader who contributed to India's development in many fields, as a member of Parliament as well as Cabinet Minister. His services can be an inspiration for those who wish to serve purposefully in public life. His speeches in the Parliament on political and developmental issues are a source of inspiration for young leaders. Shri Gupta epitomized in him all the virtues of an ideal parliamentarian, a seasoned statesman and above all an excellent and noble human being.

On this occasion, I pay my tribute to the late Shri Indrajit Gupta and wish the Monograph all success.

A P J Abdul Kalam

New Delhi
29 August 2006

(A.P. J. ABDUL KALAM)



सत्यमेव जयते

उप-राष्ट्रपति, भारत
VICE-PRESIDENT
OF INDIA

MESSAGE

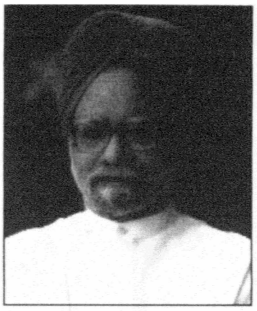
I am happy to know that the Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out a Monograph on Shri Indrajit Gupta, former Union Home Minister, and a veteran leader of the Communist Party of India.

A distinguished parliamentarian, a charismatic leader and a dedicated social worker, Shri Indrajit Gupta was a steadfast champion of the weaker sections' cause. Known for his forthright approach, he was a powerful communicator and an adept administrator who made lasting contributions in important areas of public policy and programmes. In his long career in public life, he left a distinct mark with his innate simplicity, deep commitment and dexterity. His legacy of public service, I am sure, will continue to inspire the younger generations.

I commend the efforts made towards bringing out the Monograph on Shri Indrajit Gupta. I pay my respectful tributes to the sacred memory of this great son of India.

(BHAIRON SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

New Delhi
29 August 2006



सत्यमेव जयते

प्रधान मंत्री
PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE

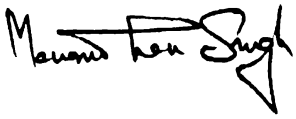
Late Shri Indrajit Gupta was one of the outstanding leaders of our nation who combined the revolutionary zeal of a Communist leader with the constitutional values of a parliamentarian and the grace and humility of a civilized individual.

His record as the longest serving member of the Lok Sabha distinguished him as one of our finest legislators. As a parliamentarian, he was ever ready to effectively use the procedural devices of the House to ventilate grievances of his constituents and serve the cause of the nation. Whenever Shri Indrajit Gupta rose to speak in the House, members of both the Treasury and Opposition benches heard him with rapt attention. His speeches are hailed as some of the best parliamentary orations.

A multifaceted personality, he excelled in successfully discharging responsibilities entrusted to him. He was the first Communist leader of our country to have become the Union Home Minister. His dedicated work and performance in carrying out the responsibilities of the Ministry testified to his credibility as a capable administrator and a leader with a vision. His moral stature and the strength of his character surpassed the positions he occupied in his long and eventful public life.

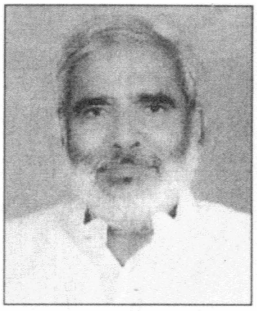
What distinguished him was his humanity, democratic world view and above all his transparent simplicity and integrity. In our own time we need to recapture the spirit represented by Shri Indrajit Gupta to restore the image of Parliament, to enrich the democratic traditions of our country and to arrest the decline of values.

I compliment the Lok Sabha Secretariat for bringing out the Monograph on Shri Indrajit Gupta and hope that it will educate and inspire its readers.



New Delhi
11 December 2006

(MANMOHAN SINGH)



सत्यमेव जयते

ग्रामीण विकास मंत्री
MINISTER OF
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MESSAGE

It is the most befitting recognition that a Monograph is being brought out on Shri Indrajit Gupta, an outstanding parliamentarian and a long-serving member of Lok Sabha, who had the record of serving eleven terms spanning a period of nearly four decades.

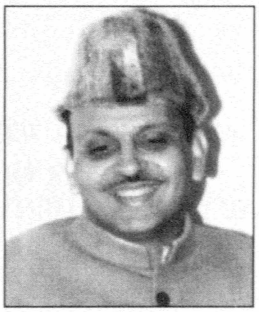
Shri Indrajit Gupta was not only one of the most outstanding trade union leaders of this country but also the first Communist to occupy the office of the Union Home Minister. Apart from interacting with Shri Gupta on numerous occasions in Parliament and outside, I had the privilege of working with him as a colleague in the Union Council of Ministers during 1996-98. In his 37 year period as Lok Sabha member, he stood for austerity in life style, Gandhian simplicity, democratic outlook and deep commitment to values.

Shri Gupta was an erudite speaker with exceptional oratorical skills. A brilliant and veteran parliamentarian and a true leader of the people, Shri Gupta remained at the vanguard of the Communist movement in the country and fought for the rights and freedom of the people, especially the under privileged and the downtrodden till the very end of his life. He enriched parliamentary debates with his exceptional skills and penetrating wit. In his long and eventful public life, marked by uncompromising honesty and integrity, Shri Gupta earned the respect and affection of all, cutting across political affiliations and ideologies. No wonder his speeches are very much popular among the political fraternity who emulate his principles, and for the students of political science, they serve as a guide.

Shri Indrajit Gupta will be remembered as a veteran parliamentarian for ever.

(DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH)

New Delhi
20 February 2007



भूतपूर्व प्रधान मंत्री, भारत
FORMER PRIME MINISTER
OF INDIA

MESSAGE

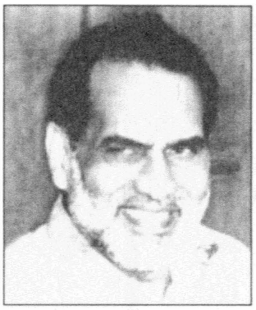
I am happy to know that the Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out a Monograph on late Shri Indrajit Gupta.

Shri Indrajit Gupta was a multifaceted personality of Indian politics. He had a brilliant academic background at both the St. Stephens College and the Cambridge University. He came back to India and joined the Communist Movement. For two decades, he was the General Secretary of AITUC. During this period he lived among the working masses and served them. His contribution to the trade unions has earned him the respect and reverence not only from the people belonging to the working masses but also from people belonging to various walks of life. He was a nationalist; he was also a great internationalist. He was the President of the Federation of World Trade Unions. His services towards the society in all spheres had given him wide recognition in India as well as abroad.

A number of times he represented West Bengal as a member of Parliament. He was an ideal administrator and a superb parliamentarian. He was endowed with qualities of humility and self-restraint. He had upheld the highest values of personal and public integrity. He had a deep impact on the national political issues; he was also a committed patriot. He was respected by one and all irrespective of political affiliations. As a member of Parliament and even as the Home Minister of India, he lived in a single room accommodation in the Western Court, New Delhi which itself explains the modest life he lived.

New Delhi
7 September 2006

(V.P. SINGH)



सत्यमेव जयते

सदस्य, लोक सभा व
भूतपूर्व प्रधान मंत्री, भारत
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER
OF INDIA

MESSAGE

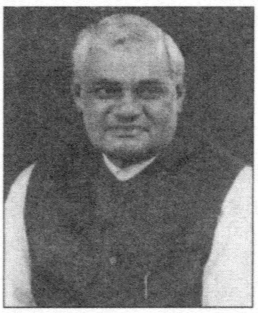
I am happy to learn that the Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out a Monograph on Late Shri Indrajit Gupta, the veteran Communist leader and former Union Home Minister. Shri Indrajit Gupta was an able parliamentarian and contributed a lot to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy. As member of Parliament and for some time as Minister, he raised issues of poverty and economic policy for the welfare of the people. It was in the fitness of things that he was conferred the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award. He fully deserved it. His speeches and Profile, undoubtedly, would be beneficial to all readers.

Wishing your endeavour all success.

Chandra Shekhar

New Delhi
23 August 2006

(CHANDRA SHEKHAR)



सत्यमेव जयते

सदस्य, लोक सभा व
भूतपूर्व प्रधान मंत्री, भारत
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER
OF INDIA

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that the Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out a Monograph on the veteran parliamentarian and former Home Minister Shri Indrajit Gupta.

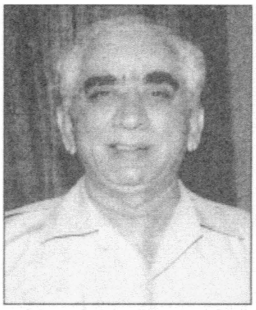
Shri Indrajit Gupta was a great parliamentarian, besides a social worker. He had made significant contributions in the social, cultural, political and foreign affairs of the country. I was fortunate to have known him for many years, both inside and outside Parliament, and was struck by his simplicity, democratic outlook and deep commitment to values. Though he belonged to a different political party, he did not allow party considerations to come into the way of personal relations. His multi-dimensional personality was unique in many ways. I had special regard and respect for him. He was a decorated member of the civil society.

I extend my heartiest congratulations to the Lok Sabha Secretariat and its staff for their efforts and for the success of their endeavour.

A.B. Vajpayee

New Delhi
30 January 2007

(A.B. VAJPAYEE)



सत्यमेव जयते

विपक्ष के नेता
राज्य सभा
LEADER OF OPPOSITION
RAJYA SABHA

MESSAGE

Shri Indrajit Gupta was a very rare parliamentarian, and a unique breed of a politician. Steadfast in his beliefs and always faithful to his principles, he was a quintessential gentleman. His early education at Cambridge, UK, his learning and his long experience in Parliament sat lightly on his shoulders.

His parliamentary skills were marked by a gentleness of tone and demeanour but by equally cogent and well-reasoned arguments. He acquired a ministerial rank and office too, but never the airs of office. Totally devoid of arrogance and pomposity, he illuminated parliamentary hours by wit, gentle argument but sharp reasoning, and always without ever raising his voice.

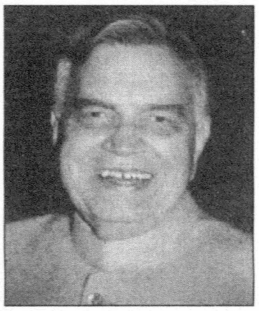
I was many years younger than him in age and in experience but he chose to befriend me from the beginning, whereafter to encourage me always, as an MP, but not once did he ever use my high regard and affection for him to blunt my own political views. We did not agree politically, but we remained strangely and strongly bonded as friends, united as members of Parliament and as two human beings.

When he left, I lost a friend and a guide.

Jaswant Singh

New Delhi
6 December 2006

(JASWANT SINGH)



राज्यपाल
मध्य प्रदेश
GOVERNOR
MADHYA PRADESH

MESSAGE

Shri Indrajit Gupta is a peerless parliamentarian in the history of Indian Parliament. He was eleven times member of the Lok Sabha. He was conferred the rare honour of 'Outstanding Parliamentarian'. He was a person with simple living and high thinking. He was a member of several Committees of the House. He endeared himself to every one, who came into contact with him. He was an eloquent speaker in the House. I, as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, observed his performance closely. He was a strong advocate of ethical and value-based politics and political parties. As Home Minister, he continued living in his MP's flat and did not shift to a bigger house, as members normally do. This speaks volumes of his values and convictions. He practised what he surmised. In his conduct, there was complete synthesis in his preaching and action. Politics was a life mission to him to serve the country and not a profession to make money and accumulate wealth. Under no situation, he compromised with his principles.

I hope this Monograph will inspire all, particularly the young, associated with political activities.

(BAL RAM JAKHAR)

Bhopal
13 December 2006

सत्यमेव जयते

उप सभापति
राज्य सभा
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN
RAJYA SABHA

MESSAGE

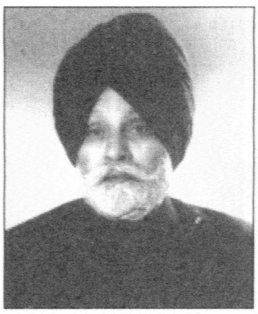
I am glad to know that the Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out a Monograph on late Shri Indrajit Gupta, veteran Communist leader and former Union Home Minister.

Shri Gupta had the record of serving eleven terms in Lok Sabha. A passionate and devoted leader, he always remained loyal to the cause of the poor and the exploited. His practical approach and articulate ways were so compelling that many noted leaders of today term him as their mentor. His contribution and service to the nation is commendable and a source of inspiration for the followers.

A leading figure in the political and cultural life of the country, he will always be remembered for his sterling qualities and his diverse contributions towards enriching our polity and society.

(K. RAHMAN KHAN)

New Delhi
18 August 2006



सत्यमेव जयते

उपाध्यक्ष
लोक सभा
DEPUTY SPEAKER
LOK SABHA

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that the Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out a commemorative volume on late Shri Indrajit Gupta, an outstanding parliamentarian of modern India and a highly respected Communist leader.

Shri Indrajit Gupta, in his long and illustrious public career, distinguished our parliamentary life in varied ways. He belonged to that rare genre of parliamentarians who made invaluable contributions to making the deliberations of the Lok Sabha very purposive and productive. Except for a short span of two years when he was the Union Minister of Home Affairs, he adorned the Opposition Benches. His rational analysis and constructive criticism of the governmental policies and programmes were applauded by all sections of the House. He also had the unique distinction of serving four times as the Speaker *pro tem* for the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th Lok Sabhas. His endeavours towards strengthening our parliamentary institutions were appropriately acknowledged when he was conferred the first Bharat Ratna Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Outstanding Parliamentarian Award in the year 1992.

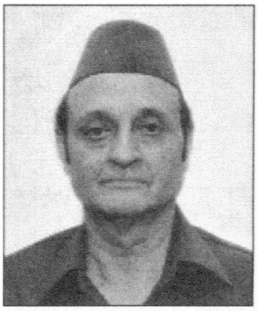
Shri Indrajit Gupta was a legendary Communist leader who devoted his entire life for the welfare of the working class and the weaker sections of society. His commitment to the service of the poor and the downtrodden was undoubtedly unwavering. He was also an epitome of simplicity and honesty, qualities which were always reflected in his public life.

When I was a member of the Eighth Lok Sabha, I got an opportunity to interact with Shri Indrajit Gupta and benefit from his wisdom and guidance. I have always considered it as a very educative and informative experience. I pay my humble tributes to this parliamentarian par excellence, who will ever remain a role model for generations of political leaders.

I congratulate the Lok Sabha Secretariat for bringing out this commemorative volume, highlighting the multifaceted personality of Shri Indrajit Gupta through his many illuminating speeches on the issues and events of more than four decades between 1960 and 2001.

New Delhi
22 February 2007

(CHARNJIT SINGH ATWAL)



सत्यमेव जयते

सदस्य, राज्य सभा
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
RAJYA SABHA

MESSAGE

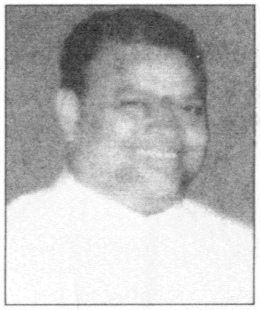
My association with Shri Indrajit Gupta goes back all the way to 1967 when I first entered the Lok Sabha. I was a Minister in Indiraji's Cabinet, and Shri Indrajit Gupta was an active and eloquent member of the Opposition. From then onwards, right until he retired from politics, we used to meet frequently. I had high regard for his ability, eloquence and sense of fair play. Even in the most bitter debates he would never allow himself to move away from the highest parliamentary conventions.

I also recall that at one point he became Home Minister in a coalition Government, and in that capacity also he conducted himself with great dignity and fulfilled his task admirably. He was an excellent conversationalist, and it was always a pleasure, meeting him and discussing matters of topical importance. It is quite extraordinary that he served as many as 11 terms in the Lok Sabha, and it is but appropriate that the Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out a Monograph on the late Shri Indrajit Gupta. Through its pages I would like to place on record the deep regard in which I held the late Shri Indrajit Gupta.

Karan Singh

New Delhi
21 August 2006

(DR. KARAN SINGH)



सदस्य, लोक सभा व
नेता, तेलुगु देशम संसदीय दल
MEMBER, LOK SABHA AND
LEADER, TELUGU DESAM
PARLIAMENTARY PARTY

MESSAGE

It is indeed a red letter day in the history of our Parliament when a Monograph is being brought out on Shri Indrajit Gupta, one of the most outstanding parliamentarians and the longest serving member of the Lok Sabha, who represented it eleven times.

Shri Indrajit Gupta was not only one of the most outstanding trade union leaders of this country but also a parliamentarian of the highest calibre. He was a true Communist who was committed to secular ideals and had a passion for the uplift of the downtrodden and poor of the country. As a firebrand trade union leader, he championed the cause of the working class.

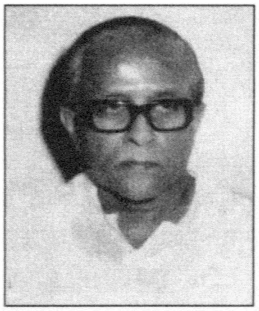
I had the privilege of interacting with Shri Indrajit Gupta on numerous occasions in Parliament and outside, when he was a member of Parliament and Union Minister of Home Affairs. I was deeply touched by his austere lifestyle, concern for the working class and integrity in public life. Such was his charm that even his staunchest political adversaries respectfully admired him.

Shri Indrajit Gupta had exceptional oratorical skills. His crisp and candid speeches, laced with wit, on popular issues were listened to with rapt attention by one and all. Indeed, his speeches are still popular among the political class and also serve as a guide for students of political science. He was one of the most well behaved parliamentarians, who never lost his cool and always maintained parliamentary decorum.

Shri Indrajit Gupta has left an indelible mark on all of us. He is a role model for future generations.

(K. YERRANNAIDU)

New Delhi
February 2007



भूतपूर्व मुख्य मंत्री
पश्चिम बंगाल
FORMER CHIEF MINISTER
WEST BENGAL

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that the Lok Sabha Secretariat has decided to bring out a Monograph on late Shri Indrajit Gupta. He was a few years younger than me. I met him in England after 1936 when he was a student in Cambridge. Those were stirring times with reaction and fascism on the march. The political ferment attracted particularly the student community, including the Indians in a big way. We organized the Indian Student's Federation and Majlises in London, Cambridge and Oxford and participated in political debates and propagated the cause of freedom for India and helped Shri Krishna Menon's India League in its propaganda work. Some of us, including Indrajit Gupta and myself, joined the Communist Party as whole-timers in 1940. I remember how to avoid arrest we stayed together in the underground dens for quite sometime. After the split in the party Indrajit remained in the CPI and I joined the CPI(M). Both of us were working in the Trade Union Movement. Like a true Communist he engaged himself in parliamentary and extra-parliamentary activities. He was elected 11 times to the Lok Sabha. Even when the party split, we did not put up a candidate against him and helped him to win. He acquired name and fame for his parliamentary activities. His speeches contained a lot of substance and were listened to with rapt attention by all members of the House. He was adept both in English and Hindi. On his early demise he received tributes from the President of India and many others. By his behaviour, he earned the respect of the Opposition also. Outside the Lok Sabha, by his sincere work among the masses, he became the General Secretary of the CPI. He also earned the rare distinction of becoming the President of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

It is indeed a good news that he is being honoured by the Lok Sabha. I pay my respectful homage to the memory of Indrajit Gupta, the foremost parliamentarian of our times.

Jyoti Basu

Kolkata
September 2006

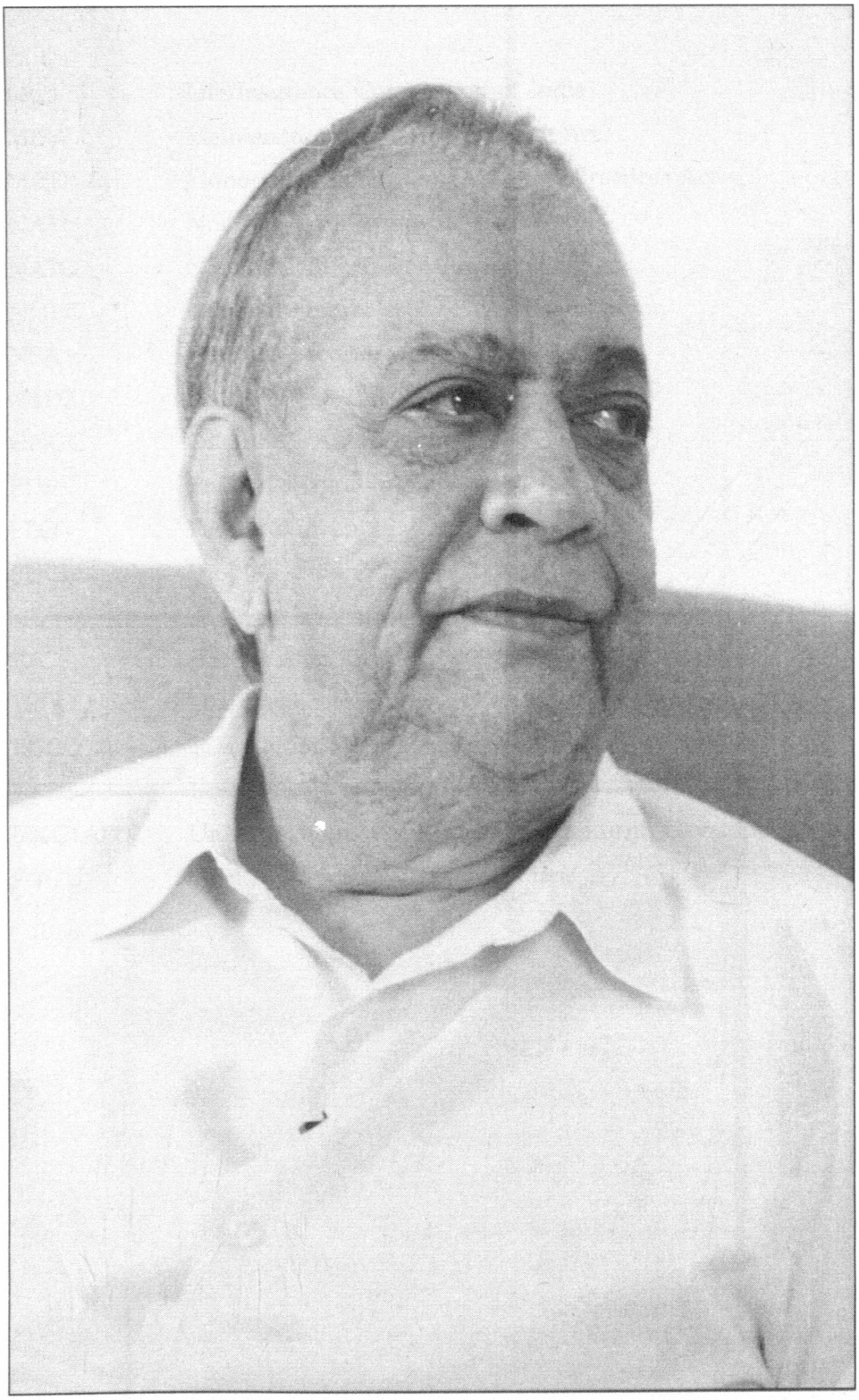
(JYOTI BASU)

ABBREVIATIONS

AASU	All Assam Students Union
AITUC	All India Trade Union Congress
BSF	Border Security Force
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CISF	Central Industrial Security Force
CRPF	Central Reserve Police Force
CSIR	Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
DIR	Defence of India Rules
ESMA	Essential Services (Maintenance) Act
FACT	Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore Limited
FERA	Foreign Exchange Regulation Act
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GIC	General Insurance Corporation
IDBI	Industrial Development Bank of India Limited
IJMA	Indian Jute Mills Association
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILTD	Indian Leaf Tobacco Development Division
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTUC	Indian National Trade Union Congress
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Programme
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence (Pakistan)
ITC	Indian Tobacco Company
ITTC	International Telephone & Telegraph Company (USA)

LIC	Life Insurance Corporation of India
MISA	Maintenance of Internal Security Act
MRTP Act	Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act
NAM	Non-aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NHPC	National Hydroelectric Power Corporation
NSA	National Security Act
NTPC	National Thermal Power Corporation
ONGC	Oil and Natural Gas Commission
PDS	Public Distribution System
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PUCL	People's Union for Civil Liberties
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
STC	State Trading Corporation
TELCO	Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company
TISCO	Tata Iron and Steel Company
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Asom
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions

Part I
PROFILE



Shri Indrajit Gupta

Shri Indrajit Gupta was one of the towering leaders of the Communist movement in the country, an outstanding parliamentarian and a committed social activist. He had the distinction of serving as many as eleven terms in the Lok Sabha which speaks eloquently of the respect and esteem in which the masses held him. As an Opposition stalwart, he lent dignity to the deliberations of the Lok Sabha for close to four decades by articulating his ideas and viewpoints with utmost clarity and conviction on a host of issues concerning the nation and its people. Indrajit Gupta was also an erudite scholar and highly accomplished administrator who campaigned throughout his lifetime for the uplift of the working class. He had a rare sensitivity to the cause of the suffering humanity and his innate simplicity, profound ideological commitment and commendable oratorical skills added luster to his public life.

Early Life

Born on 18 March 1919 in a family of distinguished civil servants, Indrajit Gupta chose to serve the nation, rather than take to the Civil Service as a career. After his schooling in Shimla, he graduated from the St. Stephen's College, Delhi, in 1937 and then left for higher education to England where he joined the King's College, Cambridge University. Attracted to the Communist movement during his student days in Britain, he returned to India in October 1940 after obtaining a degree in Economics.

Soon, Indrajit Gupta plunged himself into the freedom struggle and became a full time worker of the Communist Party of India. True to his conviction, he chose the uncertain life of a revolutionary over the comforts of an affluent life. He was assigned the job of secretly transporting Communist literature and important messages from one place to another, a task which he performed dutifully and sincerely. When the ban on the Communist Party was lifted in 1942, he was put on the trade union front of the Party.

A Committed Communist

As a committed activist of the Communist Party of India (CPI), Indrajit Gupta went underground for one and a half years during 1948-50 and suffered imprisonment in 1953 and 1959 and then again in 1969. But these hardships did not deter him in any way; on the contrary, he steadfastly remained devoted

to the Party, involving himself with the grassroots workers and the trade union movement. In the years that followed, he represented and articulated the voice of the Communist Party in the Parliament.

In 1968, Indrajit Gupta was elected the Secretary of the National Council of the Communist Party of India. He was elected as the Deputy General Secretary of the Party in 1988 and became the General Secretary of the CPI in 1990, an office which he held till 1996.

A Pioneering Trade Unionist

Right from the very beginning of his association with the Communist Party, Indrajit Gupta was involved with the Party's trade union movement. He steadfastly worked to strengthen the working class in various industries and vocations. His organizational skill, ideological fervour and sensitivity towards the cause of the working class made him a stalwart of the trade union movement in India. Indrajit Gupta was elected the General Secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) in 1980. He was also closely associated with the activities of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). In 1998, he was elected as the President of the WFTU and in the Delhi Congress of the WFTU in 2000, he was elected the President of Honour of the Organisation. Trade union activists the world over held him in high esteem and respected him as a pioneering leader who was deeply devoted to the welfare of the working class. This commitment to the working class made him spare no opportunity to cogently articulate the problems faced by the workers in the Parliament as well as outside.

An Outstanding Parliamentarian

Indrajit Gupta was first elected to the Lok Sabha in 1960 in a by-election from the South-West constituency in West Bengal and continued to be a member of the Lok Sabha till the very last, with the exception of the period between 1977 and 1980. He was a member of the Second and Third Lok Sabhas from 1960 to 1967 representing the Calcutta South-West constituency; Fourth and Fifth Lok Sabhas from 1967 to 1977 representing Alipore; Seventh and Eighth Lok Sabhas from 1980 to 1989 representing Basirhat; and Ninth to Twelfth Lok Sabhas from 1989 to 1999 representing the Midnapore parliamentary constituency of West Bengal. He was re-elected from the Midnapore parliamentary constituency in the Thirteenth Lok Sabha as well. Being the senior-most member, he was popularly known as the 'Father of the House'. He was also Speaker *pro tem* for the Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth and the Thirteenth Lok Sabhas.

In the decades that he remained a member of the Lok Sabha, Indrajit Gupta carved out a niche for himself in our parliamentary life. One

of the most outstanding legislators of all times, he was a parliamentarian par excellence who scrupulously followed the rules and procedures of the House. His deepest allegiance was to his beliefs which never came in the way of his listening with patience and even appreciating the views contrary to his own. He showed the utmost respect to the Chair and also to the conventions and traditions of the House.

During his illustrious parliamentary career, Indrajit Gupta also contributed richly to strengthening the Parliamentary Committee System in our country. He was the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence during 1995-1996 and Chairman of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation during 1999-2000. He was also member of various Parliamentary Committees like the Committee on Petitions during 1986-1987; Business Advisory Committee during 1986-1987 and 1989; Library Committee during 1990-1991; Committee to Review the Lok Sabha Secretariat Rules, 1955 during 1990; Rules Committee during 1990-1991; General Purposes Committee during 1985-1989 and from 1998-1999 to 1999-2000; and Committee on Defence, during 1998-1999 and 1999-2000.

A doyen among the parliamentarians of our country, Indrajit Gupta left a deep imprint of his remarkable personality on our nation's parliamentary and political life. During his long innings in the Parliament, he won accolades for his learned interventions during the discussions on various issues. He used the forum of Parliament to forcefully articulate the aspirations of the people and voice their concerns. He could enthrall the House with his effective, logical and forceful arguments and exceptional articulation of the issues of the times. His analytical mind was able to delineate the most complex political, social and economic issues in the most convincing manner. His oratorical skill was legendary and he could speak with authority on a wide spectrum of subjects. Of particular interest to him were matters relating to Indian agriculture, economy, industry, welfare of the working class, social issues, secularism, electoral reforms, defence and international relations.

The issues that affected the lives of the ordinary citizens and the masses always found an echo in Indrajit Gupta's speeches in Parliament and outside. He spoke passionately for workers' rights, minimum wages, trade union rights, etc. The plight of jute mill workers, tobacco plantation workers and agricultural labourers was referred to by him repeatedly in the Lok Sabha. The rise in prices of essential commodities which could affect the lives of millions of people was time and again taken up by Indrajit Gupta in Parliament. The drought situation, food scarcity, ineffectiveness of the public distribution system, the crisis in the educational system, infrastructural inadequacy in the health sector, the difficulties faced by paramilitary forces, etc. were subjects close to his heart.

A staunch advocate of self-reliance, Indrajit Gupta always stressed the imperative of developing an infrastructural base for the country, which he felt, would secure the welfare of the nation and also generate employment opportunities. He consistently supported the Public Sector Enterprises, at the same time calling for appropriate measures to fine-tune and streamline their functioning so that the PSUs could contribute purposefully towards national reconstruction.

Indrajit Gupta was a vocal champion of the cause of gender equality and he was in the forefront to demand action to have specific and concrete schemes and legislative and administrative measures for the empowerment of women. He always spoke with passion and sensitivity when issues concerning women came up before the Parliament. When the Lok Sabha was considering a Resolution on measures to put an end to economic and social injustice to women, he advocated the reservation of 15 per cent of seats for women in Parliament, as far back as in 1975. At the same time, he had also consistently called for a struggle against the centuries' old irrational prejudices which belonged to an obsolete, feudal society and stressed on a campaign for removing adult illiteracy among women, mainly in the rural areas.

Indrajit Gupta symbolized politics based on ethical values and lofty principles. He was among the first few who spoke out against the criminalisation of politics and for electoral reforms towards that end. He was an ardent champion of fundamental rights and human freedom. He envisioned an inclusive society where every citizen could enjoy the rights guaranteed under the Constitution. He also never missed an opportunity to vociferously raise his voice in and outside Parliament to fight the cancer of communalism. He was of the firm belief that the evil of communalism could not be rooted out without a proper educational system. He stressed that people should go deeply into the whole educational system at the primary and the secondary stages to see as to what their children are being taught, whether a sense of secularism and duty to the country was being inculcated in them. This, he considered, was very essential for dealing with the root cause of the growing evil of communalism.

The fissiparous tendencies in different parts of the country were a matter of concern for Indrajit Gupta. He spoke eloquently in the Lok Sabha and outside, emphasizing on the need to find amicable solution to the crises which developed in different parts of the country, including in Assam, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. Issues relating to internal security and defence preparedness also were of great concern to him. On the international plane, he called for a new world order where peace and prosperity were to prevail and where the dignity of every nation, especially in the developing world, was safeguarded. His scholarly speeches on India's role in the emerging

world, our relations with other countries, particularly our neighbours, on our nuclear policy, on the blight of apartheid, etc. were highly acclaimed by all sections of public opinion.

In recognition of his exceptional contribution to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy and parliamentary institutions in the country, Indrajit Gupta was honoured with the first Bharat Ratna Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Outstanding Parliamentarian Award in the year 1992.

As Union Home Minister

Indrajit Gupta served with distinction as the Union Minister of Home Affairs between 1996 and 1998 when his administrative acumen came to be widely acclaimed. He was the first Communist leader to occupy this high office in the Union Council of Ministers. This was the beginning of a new phase in his remarkable political career. He discharged the great responsibility of the august office with humility and firmness and took many initiatives to tone up the administration to serve all sections of the people. One of his major contributions as the Union Home Minister was the revival of the Inter-State Council as provided in the Constitution of India. He also took several measures for the development of the North-Eastern States. Besides, he laid special emphasis on electoral reforms, administrative reforms and police reforms.

A Fine Human Being

Indrajit Gupta was, above all, a fine human being who was ever dedicated to the uplift of the poor and the destitute and who always fought for the vulnerable sections of society. He used the forum of the Parliament to effectively articulate the aspirations of the people, voice their concerns and frustrations, and seek the redressal of their grievances. Through his scholarly writings, he lent his unconditional support to the fight against all forms of oppression and for the cause of human dignity. He had to his credit two publications, namely *'Capital and Labour in the Jute Industry'* and *'Self Reliance in National Defence'* which were both well-received by the reading public, the academia, political scientists and others. His grassroots experience, incisive intellect and brilliant oratory helped him to reach out to all sections of the people who found him accessible at all times despite his high standing in public life. In fact, even as the Union Home Minister, he preferred to live in his small flat in the Western Court in New Delhi rather than shift to a spacious bungalow that was his legitimate due, which speaks volumes of his simplicity, unassuming disposition and unostentatious nature.

A living embodiment of the finest traditions of parliamentary democracy as also of integrity, uprightness and social and intellectual sensitivity, Indrajit

Gupta passed away on 20 February 2001 at the age of 82 at his residence in Kolkata.

The then President of India, Shri K.R. Narayanan, while paying tributes to the departed leader, observed that Indrajit Gupta "enriched parliamentary proceedings and debates with his passionate espousal of public causes, his eloquent oratory and subtle and penetrating wit". The then Vice-President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri Krishan Kant, described Indrajit Gupta as "a versatile parliamentarian, a powerful communicator, an adept administrator and a distinguished mass leader who left a distinct mark in society and in polity with his innate simplicity, commitment and sincerity". The then Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, describing Indrajit Gupta as a "towering personality" recalled that "his life was like an open book. He always expressed his views as a seasoned parliamentarian and contributed greatly for evolving consensus in the time of crisis. He had always a deep sense of concern for the problems of the country and the lot of the downtrodden and the exploited."

Several national leaders and all political parties also condoled the demise of Comrade Indrajit Gupta. As the West Bengal Chief Minister, Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, pointed out in his tribute, in Indrajit Gupta's death, India had lost an outstanding leader genuinely dedicated to the welfare of the people and secular ideals.

On 5 December 2006, a statue of Shri Indrajit Gupta was unveiled in the Parliament House by the Vice-President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, in honour of the many-splendoured contributions to our national life by this outstanding parliamentarian. The function was attended by the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Union Ministers, members of Parliament and other dignitaries.

PART II
ARTICLES

INDRAJIT GUPTA : TRADE UNIONIST, LEADER AND PARLIAMENTARIAN

*—Pranab Mukherjee**

Shri Indrajit Gupta, a veteran Communist leader, was known to me since mid 1960s. I have some fond memories of my association with him. In 1964, there was communal tension in Kolkata, especially in the Kidderpore, Matiaburez areas of South Kolkata and a Peace Committee was constituted under the leadership of Shri Indrajit Gupta. As a member of the Peace Committee, I got an opportunity to see Shri Gupta closely wherein I observed, the tremendous influence he had over the people of that area irrespective of their caste.

Shri Gupta worked amongst the Dock labour and other workers and spent considerable time for them, after returning from UK. He was one of the few Communist leaders of Bengal who got attracted to the Communist movement while studying in England. Shri Gupta converted to Communism and started working among the Dock workers. He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth as he came from a rich family. Besides, his elder brother was an ICS Officer. Though Shri Gupta was brought up in an atmosphere of plenty, he did not hesitate to lead a hard life as a Comrade. He was elected to the Lok Sabha in a bye-election from South-West constituency in West Bengal in 1960 and subsequently won elections to Third, Fourth and Fifth Lok Sabhas. Though he was defeated in 1977, he was again elected in 1980 and continued as member of Lok Sabha till his last. As a parliamentarian, he was really outstanding. His command over language and mastery of facts were unparalleled. It was a great pleasure to listen to his parliamentary debates. I remember, while participating in the budget discussion in 1982, he termed India's borrowings from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as inappropriate. His main contention was that India was moving towards a debt trap by borrowing such huge amounts from IMF. While participating in the debate, he gave a large number of examples of how IMF conditionalities can weaken the basic strength of any country's economy and can compel it to support the interests of multinational banking companies. While replying to the debate as Finance Minister, I responded to his criticism and assured him that India would not fall in the debt trap, as apprehended by him. Then,

* Union Minister of External Affairs.

after two years, when I announced in the Lok Sabha that India has decided not to avail the last instalment of IMF borrowing amounting to SDRs 1 billion, he expressed his happiness and congratulated me by stating "Thank God, you have come out of IMF, holding your head erect on your shoulder and not on a stretcher".

Indrajit Gupta was a man of high integrity and throughout his life he maintained high standards of public life. He served as Union Home Minister in the Government led by Shri H.D. Deve Gowda and Shri I.K. Gujral and his performance during this period was highly appreciated. He recognized the need of reforming police forces to cope with the emerging security situation. Shri Indrajit Gupta had the rare qualities of head and heart and during his long political career he never indulged in any narrow partisan politics. As one of the founders of the Communist movement in the country and a leading Left trade union leader, he has left a lasting impression on the minds of the people.

INDRAJIT GUPTA : A GREAT PARLIAMENTARIAN

*—Saifuddin Soz**

Today, more than five years after his death, it appears that Indrajit Gupta is still amongst us. Such was his towering personality. I vividly remember some of the close moments I had the opportunity to spend with him. We were Cabinet colleagues in the Governments led by former Prime Ministers, Shri H.D. Deve Gowda and later, by Shri I.K. Gujral. I was the Minister for Environment & Forests in the same Government, and Shri Indrajit Gupta was the Home Minister. We would meet often, in and after Cabinet meetings and in Parliament and exchange ideas on various situations of public interest. He would express his opinion very frankly as he had no inhibitions.

What had impressed me most about his personality was his sincerity and openness. He would never, unlike traditional politicians, take refuge in cliches and generalities. He was always specific and to the point. I remember quite vividly as to how while replying to supplementaries in Parliament, he would go beyond his brief and explain the policy of the Government in a broader perspective. His lucid style of expressing ideas in the Parliament was deeply appreciated by one and all.

Shri Indrajit Gupta had been independent India's longest serving parliamentarian and the first Communist Home Minister. As the General-Secretary of the CPI, he left a deep imprint of his personality on the party, and guided its deliberations and policies with diligence and dignity. The late leader held the record of winning the maximum number of Lok Sabha elections *i.e.* in 11 terms. He represented West Bengal from the Second Lok Sabha to the Thirteenth Lok Sabha continuously except for the Sixth Lok Sabha.

Educated at St. Stephen's College, Delhi and King's College, Cambridge (U.K.), Shri Indrajit Gupta had developed a perception and outlook, which was far ahead of the times he lived in. He was a liberal to the core and always thought far ahead of his contemporaries. He never liked to work within the limits set by others, either politically or administratively. Though this attitude of his caused problems occasionally, but he always had a solution to it.

---

* Union Minister of Water Resources.

I remember his boldness in agreeing to propositions or disagreeing with them. When I was piloting the case for getting equal treatment in respect of salary, grade, etc. for the Forest Service officers in my Ministry and wanted IFS to be put on a par with, at least IPS, many of my colleagues disagreed, but Indrajit Gupta wanted to understand the problem fully. I explained to him that the Wild Life or Forests were in the danger zone and Forest officers were required to perform an onerous job and, therefore, they must be put on par with the IPS. It was Indrajit Gupta's unequivocal support in the Cabinet that saw the proposal through. He was, surely, one of the most knowledgeable and dignified members of the Parliament and he enjoyed respect from members of Parliament and general run of politicians, cutting across party lines.

INDRAJIT GUPTA : A GREAT HUMAN BEING

*—Manohar Joshi**

Thinking of Shri Indrajit Gupta, one gets the image of a multi-faceted personality. Endowed with innumerable qualities, he was a great patriot, a successful parliamentarian, a thinker, a statesman, a champion of farmers, labourers and workers and a good human being. These countless qualities made Indrajit Babu quite popular amongst all sections of the society. Given this opportunity I am also tempted to pen down certain impeccable facets of a statesman of this stature.

As a Parliamentarian

A good parliamentarian is one who not only represents his people faithfully but also contributes in the parliamentary system of governance. The qualities of Shri Gupta as a well-known parliamentarian are established from the very fact that he was elected to the Lok Sabha eleven times. He was associated with various Parliamentary Committees, including the Standing Committee on Defence, the Rules Committee, the General Purpose Committee, the Committee on Petitions, the Business Advisory Committee, etc. He always maintained the dignity and decorum of the House. At times he gave valuable advice to the Chair and also to all the leaders of the political parties, on how to resolve social, political and economics crisis in the country. He was not only well versed in parliamentary procedure but was also deft in putting forth his views logically, in all seriousness, to the imagination of the common people. He was a Communist who firmly believed in parliamentary democracy. There were occasions of disagreement, feelings of conflict and aggressiveness, but he always maintained the dignity of the House. During discussions on important issues he always put things in a way that was different from his previous speakers and his speech had great impact on the House. Everybody listened to him carefully. His masterly debating brilliance in the Parliament will be remembered for a long time by all his colleagues. Being the senior-most member in the House he acted as *pro tem* Speaker four times, conducted the House and administered oath to all members of Parliament. He was rightly known as the 'Father of the House'.

*Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and former Speaker of Lok Sabha.

As a Champion of Workers

After his return from England, Shri Gupta plunged himself into the trade union movement and he was looked as one the Messiahs of the toiling masses of the country. Shri Gupta was associated with the trade union movement which catapulted him into the central stage of politics. He made concerted efforts to safeguard workers' interest. He used to propagate the interest of working class in and outside the country. He devoted his entire life for the sake of the poor and the working class. He always had a deep sense of concern for the problems of the country and the lot of the down trodden and the exploited. It is worth mentioning that he could have lived an easier and comfortable life, but he chose the path of struggle.

As a Statesman

Shri Gupta was committed to the ideology of his party and he presented his thoughts and arguments in a very polite language. There was firmness in his personality. His life was like an open book. We look up to Shri Gupta as an elder statesman whose vision of India was inclusive, never exclusive. He was such an intelligent person, a scholar, that he used to make the most complicated subject appear very simple to the layman. He stuck to what he thought proper even in administrative matters and translated his ideas into action. He would stick to his opinion in a logical way but equally honoured the consensus opinion. He had a deep faith in democracy. He always advocated the unity of secular forces.

As a Minister

As the Union Home Minister, he dedicated himself to the discharge of his functions and his compassion for the people was undisputable. He practised total transparency in the discharge of his duty as a Minister. His commitment, his wisdom and his advise in the Cabinet was always honoured. Even as a Minister he would say and act with great honesty and he used to say what he thought to be right. As the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, I had the opportunity to interact with him on a variety of issues, including security matters when he was the Home Minister of the country. Every time he would listen patiently to us and give useful advice and help.

As a Human Being

Shri Gupta was magnificent as a human being. He was an embodiment of so much simplicity that he continued in Western Court even after assuming the august Office of the Home Minister. With his courteous behaviour he earned the respect of one and all. The demise of Shri Gupta was an irreparable loss to this country. We not only lost a great visionary but a nice human being

as well. We will continue to be inspired by his nationalist approach and convictions. I pay my sincerest homage to such a great character. With all humility, I wish I could have had a longer association with such a towering personality.

FATHERLY INDRAJIT : THE VOICE OF THE DOWNTRODDEN

*—Rupchand Pal**

Whenever the House was in disorder of some sorts, whatever the dimension of the disorder, every section of the House looked to "the Father" sitting in the corner of the front bench facing the Chair. He was none other than the veteran parliamentarian Indrajit Gupta, the very distinguished leader of the Communist Party of India and the well known trade union leader. The House was obviously the Lok Sabha. Ultimately, the baritone voice in quality English "the Father" spoke out. And the House found a solution. The House was again in order, may be following a brief discussion in the Hon'ble Speaker's Chamber and, of course, in the presence of the 'Father'.

It was a long innings spanning decades for "the Father" in Parliament, starting from 1960 and continuing till his death barring a brief spell of absence when he was not a member. Since I got elected to the Seventh Lok Sabha in 1980, I had opportunity to closely watch Indrajitda as a Parliamentarian. As a new-comer I soon realized that I had a lot of things to learn from this no-nonsense performer of high excellence. Be it the Rules of Procedure, the conventions, the precedents, the earlier Directions of Hon'ble Speakers on ticklish issues—everything came ready with him as he spoke with total ease, shooting out sharp precise points, armed with logic. Again it was quality English—simple, direct and a baritone voice. When necessary, he could smoothly switchover to Hindi, bordering on popular *Hindustani*, reminding the colleagues that he was a great orator even among the multilingual audience of the Jute Mill workers. He could carry the masses with him.

As a Communist party activist in the early 1950s I had the occasion to listen to his speeches. I was a little over eighteen, the General Secretary of the Students Union of a prestigious college then. It was a great attraction for us. He was a star speaker for younger people like us in those days. But we admired Indrajitda from a distance even when he was only an 'elderly comrade' in the United Communist Party. We could come closer to some other leaders but he remained a 'distant leader' for admiration, beyond reach and approach to younger ones for reasons not fully realized by us then.

* Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha).

But when I came to Parliament I discovered him anew. Once you could pierce the veil of the gravity of his personality, he was just like your close friend, your next door neighbour, your friendly co-passenger—we discovered. Sometimes we made mistakes, errors, while speaking in Parliament, then he corrected us. A great teacher and an unfailing guide, we had in him in those early days of ours in the Lok Sabha.

Once, I remember, some of us, new comers to Parliament, were attending an Orientation Programme for new members and Indrajitda was discussing Question Hour, the Starred Question, "How to ask Supplementary Questions etc." "It should be pointed, precise. Its aim should be to seek information. To expose the wrong policy of the government if any"—the baritone voice enlightened us. We learnt how to ask Supplementary Questions during the Question Hour. But when Indrajitda himself asked Supplementary Questions, we rediscovered we have a lot more to learn beyond the Orientation programmes for new comers.

His valuable speeches in Parliament make interesting reading —they will continue to be so—educative, informative, forceful, modern, stylish but eminently simple in language. Who can forget his great speeches during his long tenure in Parliament on secularism, on Workers' Rights, on Centre-State relations, on Foreign Policy, on the Role of Public Sector in the country and self-reliance of the economy, to mention a few!

"Brevity is the soul of Wit"—we memorized from our early school days. But while listening to Indrajitda's sharp rejoinders and instant interventions, we could realize what the above proverb actually meant. We enjoyed the wit, the irony, sometimes the humour or even caustic sarcasm—the spices in the wholesome constructive speech but the classically cut gravity of Indrajit Gupta continued as if still in some kind of a steel frame of discipline and high culture. Yes, he belonged as if to a different community as demonstrated through his gait, his gesture, his life style. He was a class by himself; incomparable.

His elder brother Shri Ranjit Gupta, ICS, was the Chief Secretary of West Bengal Government when the legendary Dr. B.C. Roy was the Chief Minister. He was liked immensely and loved profusely by his friends and relatives, many of whom belonged to an exclusive modern elitist society trying to adjust and find a suitable role in free India.

But it was his deep attention for Marxism—Leninism, a vision of emancipation of mankind from all sorts of exploitation and the goal of establishment of a classless society; Communism—where "from each according to his ability and to each according to his necessity" should be the order of

the society that dragged him out of the cosy comfort of his affluent home. It was Scientific Socialism as a great goal for mankind that Indrajitda joined the struggle, with the great vision of such a goal before him to achieve it through long hard struggle.

The Indian Communist movement, the struggle of the Left, the marching forward of the workers, peasantry and the toiling masses and the middle class people has its long history of ups and downs, separation and convergence but Indrajitda always tried to reflect the aspirations of the downtrodden in the House, also as a Minister in the Union Cabinet, which he was for a brief period between 1996-98 with unfailing loyalty to a great cause.

Indrajit Gupta is no more. But in the annals of Indian Parliament he will be remembered not only as belonging to the Best Parliamentarians category but for his unwavering commitment to the cause of the downtrodden and the exploited. And this is for what the shell of elitist steel frame was broken and came out a real voice of the people—the logical sharp voice, the call to join struggle and march forward towards that goal, that vision which pulled Indrajitda out of the comforts of his affluent home.

The march continues. His call reverberates—'We Shall overcome Some Day'.

Long Live Indrajitda.

COMRADE INDRAJIT GUPTA : AN UNDAUNTED FIGHTER

*—Ajay Chakraborty**

To pen anything on a stalwart like Indrajit Gupta is not only a daunting task but quite a difficult one, because Indrajit Gupta was not only an unstoppable crusader for the emancipation of the downtrodden people but at the same time a staunch fighter for the end of the exploitation of man by man—the greatest sin of human civilization.

He was born on 18 March 1919 in Kolkata in a well-to-do family. His father was Satish Chandra Gupta. After his schooling, he graduated from the St. Stephen's College in Delhi in 1937 and proceeded to England according to family wishes for higher education and joined Cambridge University to pursue his studies.

While studying in England, he got attracted to the anti-fascist activities of an organization of Indian students called Indian *Majlis*. Perhaps his background from a colonial country played a positive role behind this. This Indian *Majlis* was affiliated to the Federation of Indian Students Societies in Europe, which in turn was a subsidiary of the India League of V.K. Krishna Menon.

In this period, his search for the part to end the miseries of downtrodden began with right earnest and very soon, he was attracted by the strong ideas and principles of Marxism and embraced it. His conviction to the revolutionary and scientific principles and path for the emancipation of the deprived people lasted until his last breath.

Before his return to India in 1940, he took his degree from the Cambridge University in Economics. Soon thereafter, he joined the Communist Party of India and held aloft the red banner of the toiling masses for his entire life. After joining the party, he started his activities and successfully discharged the responsibilities given to him by the party, including clandestine courier activities like carrying important party literature and letters between Delhi and other places.

* Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha)

Impressed with his work, he was shifted by the party to Kolkata to work on the trade union front. He first started his trade union activities among the jute workers and gradually started to organize the Port and Dock Workers of Kolkata port. In no time, his oratorical capability and his ability to analyse the workers' problems along with his pleasant personality made him quite a popular figure among the workers and middle class intelligentsia alike.

As the final stages of the freedom struggle of the country was being enacted at that period, one could find him in the forefront of all the anti-imperialist and anti-fascist struggles along with his work for the trade unions. He knew very well that the two struggles are inter-twined and cannot be separated, each supplementing the other. He was discharging his responsibilities untiringly.

In 1960, during one of the by-elections to the Second Lok Sabha, the party set him as one of its candidates and he got elected and entered the Lok Sabha for the first time as a people's representative and was there until his last day barring the Sixth Lok Sabha, *i.e.*, from 1977 to 1980.

In recognition of his work he was first elected to as the Secretary of the National Council of the Party Secretariat in 1968 and became the Deputy General Secretary of the Party in 1988 and elevated to the post of General Secretary in 1990. But after assuming the charge of the Home Minister in the Union Council of Ministers in 1996 he relinquished the party post but remained as a member of the Party's Central Secretariat.

Throughout his party life, he played a vital role in building the Communist movement and his party colleagues immensely benefited from his vast ocean of experience and knowledge, as he was the link between the first generation of Communist leaders with the second and others.

In discharging his parliamentary responsibilities—be it as Minister or as Chairman of various parliamentary committees he left behind an indomitable impression in the minds of not only his parliamentary colleagues but also in the minds of political scientists and the political watchers of the country, which, I believe, will remain there for many years to come.

The recommendations made by the Electoral Reforms Committee under his Chairmanship and able guidance would make a deep impact in our whole electoral process for many years to come. He belonged to one of those rare breed of parliamentarians whose orations in the House were always heard with deep respect and silence by all, irrespective of political ideologies. It was some thing unique, particularly at a time when the pandemonium becomes the order of the day, every day.

His dedication to the work and devotion to people's cause at every moment, his vast knowledge and his ability to grasp the crux of the problem, along with his oratorical skill and towering personality earned him the first Bharat Ratna Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Outstanding Parliamentarian Award in 1992. Incidentally, this award was constituted only in that year for the first time.

He was appointed as the *pro tem* Speaker by the Honourable President of India for the Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Lok Sabhas, a feat that earned him the nick name "Father of the House", a rare feat indeed.

Here, I must mention that I feel myself honoured that I got the opportunity to take oath in all these terms in the House from no other person than Indrajit Gupta.

Though he was our party leader for a very long time, but I came closer to him when the party decided to set him as a candidate for the Lok Sabha elections from Basirhat constituency in West Bengal, as this is my native place. At that time I found that minute details of the problems of the constituency were at his finger-tips. He always had first hand knowledge about all the developments concerning his constituency in spite of being an outsider. He was well aware of the agricultural scenario and particularly had great concern for the jute growers and their problems. Naturally, he could establish a close rapport with the rural populace very easily.

Further, when I came to the Lok Sabha for the first time on being elected from the Basirhat Constituency, it was again he from whom I came to know the many intricacies that are involved in the Parliament in representing the constituency. It was really an opportunity of my life time to have a teacher like him.

Though the demands of the times and the political scenario of the country made him shoulder many a burden, the trade union front remained his first love and he never dissociated himself from the trade union activities. And as a natural consequence thereof, in 1980, he was elected the General Secretary of the pioneer trade union movement of our country *i.e.*, the All India Trade Union Congress. In 1998 the highest forum of the trade unions all over the world, the World Federation of Trade Unions, chose him as its President.

Indrajit Gupta was a well-read person and an erudite writer of many articles on various subjects who also penned a few books to his credit. Here I would like to mention the names of two important works—the first one being the *Capital and Labour in the Jute Industry*. This book still remains a Bible for the trade union workers in the jute industry. Perhaps his beginning stint as trade unionist in the jute industry might have inspired him to produce such a work containing his vast experience in the jute industry.

The other one is *Self-Reliance in National Defence.* Here he explained why in modern days self-reliance is important to have a fool-proof national defence system, particularly in the post-colonial era when the various developed countries got involved in a cut throat competition to capture the markets of the newly liberated countries and for this unleashed a virulent attack on the economies of those countries as, under the colonialist exploitation and appropriation of wealth from these countries, the economies were completely shattered.

20 February 2001 made me totally dumbfounded when I heard the news of his passing away; his health was deteriorating for quite a some time after the dreaded disease cancer was detected as eating up the vitals of his body. The end came quite abruptly and our country lost one of its greatest leaders and sons.

REAL TRIBUNE OF THE PEOPLE

*—Prabodh Panda**

"He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again."

(Hamlet—Shakespeare)

Here 'He' was Comrade Indrajit Gupta. The great outstanding parliamentarian, a towering personality, renowned world famous trade unionist and above all the real representative of the people in Indian Parliament, called the House of the People.

I recall the gloomy day of 22 February 2001, just two days after his sorrowful demise, when a special flight from Delhi landed at Kolkata Air Port carrying a galaxy of prominent senior leaders, eminent parliamentarians and Ministers on board led by the then Home Minister of India, Shri L.K. Advani. From Air Port they rushed to Bhupesh Bhawan, the State Headquarter of the Communist Party of India, West Bengal State Unit, to pay their tribute to the mortal body of Indrajit Gupta. That day Kolkata had witnessed a very strong spectacle, columns of men and women, workers, peasants, youths, students and intelligentsia and the leaders from every shade were streaming in to the centre of the city.

Indrajit, the son of a wealthy family which had given a number of civil service officers, went to Cambridge in England. There he found himself among the oppressed of his motherland. The prevailing inequality disturbed him very much. He decided to devote himself to the service of the toiling people, the masses who had been deeply oppressed in the society. It was as if to him "That ever I was born to set it right."

Another day may be recalled. That was 29 July 2001. It was a red letter day to me as I was privileged to have been sworn in as a newly elected member of the Lok Sabha on the very first day of the monsoon session. After my swearing in Honourable Speaker G.M.C. Balayogi made a compliment from the Chair with these words "you have been elected from such a constituency which had been occupied by no other than the Father of this House."

* Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha)

That was his recognition. Our great Lok Sabha, the House of the People, had been glorified by several outstanding parliamentarians. They might be compared with members of the House of Commons. Indrajit Gupta was one of them. He was the parliamentarian who had been felicitated for the first time with the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award, the award named after Pandit Gobind Ballabh Pant.

It was acknowledged by all sections of the House that as a member he displayed a high sense of responsibility in fulfilling his duties for 37 long years of his parliamentary life span. We could distinguish him by his intellect and wit, articulation and sharp arguments, parliamentary etiquette and decency, mastery over the language and the subjects as well.

It is acknowledged that while addressing Parliament he was never daunted by the malicious shouts or any sort of obstruction staged by the others. His speech was imbued with faith in the people and his desire to do everything possible for their welfare. His skillful approach to the most intricate matters, his insight into the essence of the problems and his erudition impressed even those who differed with his political and ideological perception. His speeches in the House invariably drew a capacity audience. It was observed that even the best orators of the treasury benches or even others were afraid to have any polemic with him. His straight-forward talk, modest and sober language rather than emotional outbursts or demagogic posture, distinguished him from others. He made his mark in the Parliament not by ignoring or breaking the rules of procedure or coming down to the well or instigating others to do so, but by skillfully using the rules and parliamentary devices to drive home his points.

He was always a gentleman even while dealing with the opponents and his retorts were an example of how to deal with interruptions without losing temper or balance. Today, people talk about morality, ethics, life style, public dealings and the Code of Conduct for the peoples' representatives, etc. Talk is also going on about criminalization of politics or politicalisation of criminals. Indrajit Gupta was among the first who stood above narrow interests and urged all the political parties not to give ticket to those who had alleged criminal records.

Indrajit Gupta was one of the most popular public speakers in our country. He asserted a new style in public oratory. His public speeches were based on a thorough scientific analysis of facts and addressed to the reason of the listeners, not their emotions only.

I was fortunate to have come in touch with him and had the privilege to enjoy his indulgence and affection. In fact he was my leader—friend, philosopher and guide. It gives me immense pleasure and makes me overjoyed

to think that I have been chosen to be his successor to represent his constituency to the House of the People. He was attributed the stature of the father of the House and eventuality made me his successor like a child of a great father. A simple ordinary single bedroom flat at the Western Court was his residential address. During the long 37 years of his parliamentary life that was his only address. Even after assuming the charge of Home Minister of India, he did not change it.

After his demise, the then President of India, His Excellency Dr. K.R. Narayanan, in his condolence message had said that he was "struck by his Gandhian simplicity, democratic outlook and deep commitment to values.....he served the nation with dedication and distinction." Thus, he served the nation, thus he touched the humanity. He is dead physically. But he has not perished. Let his precedents be remembered by the members, especially the freshers in the Parliament. The posterity will remember him with reverence. Let me conclude by quoting Tagore:

"Let us die, and yet not perish
For we die when we lose
Our physical life,
We perish when we miss
Our humanity"

(Rabindranath Tagore on Man's nature)

Indrajit Gupta is dead but he has not perished.

INDRAJIT GUPTA: AN INCREDIBLE COMMUNIST WITH INTENSE HUMANISM

*—B.R. Bhagat**

Indrajit Gupta, an incredible Communist with a strong human orientation, was a shining exponent of the Progressive Movement in post-Independence era. He had the extremely rare distinction of being not only the longest serving member of the Lok Sabha (1960-2001) with a small hiatus of two years, but also winning the first Outstanding Parliamentarian Award in 1992. I consider these two achievements are unparalleled in our parliamentary history. I am fortunate enough to have witnessed and to have been associated with the magnanimous leader of the Communist Party of India since 1960 when he joined the Second Lok Sabha and became a fellow traveller in Parliament.

During the 1950s, it was the period of political dominance of our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and B.C. Roy was the Chief Minister of West Bengal. I was a member of the Treasury Benches and holding the Finance portfolio. I vividly recall that the parliamentary seat of South-West Calcutta became vacant as the election tribunal declared the election of Biren Roy null and void and Indrajit Gupta hailing from a well known elite family, contested the bye-election and defeated A.K. Dutta, a candidate of the Congress Party. Since then he never looked back till his sudden demise in 2001.

I have had the privilege of the membership of Lok Sabha, the supreme representative body, since the days of Provisional Parliament till 1989 with a small interruption during 1977-79. My parliamentary career of 37 years ran parallel more or less to Indrajit Gupta, a gifted orator with sharp intellect. Both of us share a few similarities, serving the Lok Sabha for almost 37 years. Indrajit Gupta began his legislative career ten years later than that of mine. In this long chequered parliamentary career both of us never became the member of the Elder House. I was elected to the august post of the Speaker of Lok Sabha in 1976, he had the unique distinction to serve as the *pro-tem* Speaker four times of the Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Lok Sabhas and became the Union Home Minister in 1996. The most visible difference between us was that I happened to be always a member of the Treasury Benches, being mostly part of the Council of Ministers of great leaders like

*Former Speaker of Lok Sabha.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, Smt. Indira Gandhi and Shri Rajiv Gandhi while during these years he was always on the Opposition Benches. We also differed widely in terms of ideology, policies and perceptions of socio-economic progress of the nation. In spite of these significant differences, I have great respect and admiration for Indrajit Gupta. Like many others, I am also a great admirer of his wisdom and contribution both on the floor and outside the House.

A legendary Communist leader, Indrajit Gupta was a product of schooling at Shimla, St. Stephen's College, Delhi and King's College, Cambridge University. He was born in a traditional bureaucratic elite family of Bengal and was brought up in a very affluent environment. He embraced the cause of the working class and volunteered for political work in the Communist Party of India. He sacrificed all the luxuries and comfort and dedicated his services to the cause of working class and he never deviated from his commitment to Communism. In fact, he was as perfect a Communist, as one could imagine. He had displayed principled social commitment throughout his life and set a role model for the posterity. His simplicity and honesty are beyond doubt. It could be substantiated by the fact that when he became the Union Home Minister, he continued to live in a two room set of the Western Court and used to attend the office at North Block from there.

A gifted genius, Indrajit Gupta belonged to a genre of parliamentarians who revered and enriched our parliamentary institutions. Having the distinction of the longest serving parliamentarian of the largest working democracy, he made enlightening contributions to the deliberations of the House. He was known for his regard for the rules of procedure and also for his vast knowledge, brilliant and spell binding speeches, and incisive and logical arguments. His favourite topics were economics and defence but he always tried to raise diverse issues, especially pertaining to the working class. He was known for ratiocination among fellow parliamentarians. His presentation of facts and figures was superb and flawless; his criticism was very sharp and effective. I had observed on several occasions that he was more prepared than his counterpart Minister. I had also observed that he was very regular in attending the House. He hardly missed it. In fact, he used to come before 11 a.m. reading newspapers, and magazines in Parliament Library and remained beyond the sitting of the House. He was equally popular among media persons and officials. Nobody was surprised when he was chosen for the conferment of the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award in 1992. He was the first recipient of this Award and he was a deserving natural choice. While receiving the Award he acknowledged his deep commitment to the ideals of Communism in the following words:

> "For fifty years or more, I have been a whole-time worker of the Communist Party. In our country, at least from the very dawn of

Independence, the Communists have believed in parliamentary democracy as the most suited institution for a country like ours."

Indrajit Gupta was among that rare breed of the parliamentarians who always fought for democratic socialism and never allowed dogmatism to dominate their liberal outlook. In terms of parliamentary calibre and deliberations, he belonged to the same class of leaders of the Opposition such as Prof. Hiren Mukerjee, Bhupesh Gupta, Rammanohar Lohia, Madhu Limaye and Madhu Dandavate.

A true disciple of the legendary academician Rajani Palme Dutt, Indrajit Gupta was greatly influenced by the revolutionary ideals of Lenin. He followed the teachings and ideals of both throughout his life. While he was in England, he was a regular subscriber of the *"Labour Monthly"* brought out by Dutt. He was a realist and a full time trade-union activist. When he became a member of Parliament, he was able to maintain the utmost humility and modesty even when he assumed the charge of the Union Home Minister in 1996. As a Home Minister, he tried his best to reform the police organization. He was a great exponent of reforms in the electoral system. I recall that a multi-party parliamentary committee under the Chairmanship of Indrajit Gupta was constituted to look into the question of state funding of elections. Indrajit Gupta recommended partial state funding of recognized political parties and their candidates in elections. He was totally opposed to contribution and sponsoring by the big industrialists and businessmen.

As I have known him for more than four decades both inside and outside Parliament, I was mesmerized by his simplicity, his broad outlook and his deep commitment to human values. Above all, I have found him a very decent gentleman. When I was the Governor of Rajasthan, I received a telephone call from the then Home Minister, Indrajit Gupta, requesting me that he would like to visit Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti at Ajmer along with his wife. Welcoming him, I quizzed, "Mr. Home Minister, you are a true follower of Marx. Why are you intending to visit a religious worshipping place, that also at this age". He replied with modesty, "I have my wife Suraiya, and she has expressed her desire to offer prayer at Ajmer Sharif." Further he wittingly added, "I am the Home Minister of India but I have also a Home Minister at my home".

To conclude, I recollect the words of appreciation of Indrajit Gupta, which he had used for me when I became the Speaker of Lok Sabha. His impeccable language made me feel proud. It was a tumultuous period of the national emergency. Most of the stalwarts of the Opposition were in jail. There was a sign of growing restlessness even in a section of the Congress Party. I was assigned a special responsibility to run the Parliament smoothly and in an

orderly manner. When I became Speaker in January 1976, felicitating me, Indrajit Gupta said:

> "I had read in the Press, in the foreign Press, that a very controversial and difficult subject, which was being discussed there and which, for the time being, had appeared as though it would not be possible to reach and kind of consensus or unanimity, was finally solved due in no small measure to the skill and persuasiveness of the Indian Chairman. But the foreign press report did not mention the name of that Indian Chairman. It was our friend, Mr. Bali Ram Bhagat. And when I met him in London, I asked him, how did you bring about this result? What was the secret of it? Because the people who were involved in that controversy were generally the forces which do not come together very easily. But Mr. Bhagat, in his characteristic modesty, said: 'No, no, it is not my credit; everybody cooperated and we were able to do our work.' About his capabilities, I have not the slightest doubt in my mind."

FATHER OF THE HOUSE

*—Narayan Datt Tiwari**

I had a long association with the veteran CPI leader and the longest serving parliamentarian Shri Indrajit Gupta. For his outspokenness, clarity of thought and impeccable language, Shri Gupta was admired by both the Treasury and Opposition benches. Recipient of the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award in 1992, he was one of the last of a generation of privileged Indians who sacrificed the advantage of birth to serve the nation. My appreciation of this fiery trade union leader is unreserved because he was a staunch supporter of a separate Uttarakhand State. The dreams of the people of Uttarakhand came true and now Uttarakhand is the 27th State of the country. The people of Uttarakhand are indebted to his support and cooperation for making consensus in Parliament. As the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, I would like to pay glowing tributes to him.

As an Opposition stalwart and the Leader of the CPI Group Shri Indrajit Gupta's speeches in the Lok Sabha were marked by force, with moderation and criticism with reason, which earned him the admiration of even his political opponents. As Home Minister, during the United Front Government (1996-98), Shri Indrajit Gupta was blunt about Government's failures and raised many an eyebrows among the Treasury Benches with his frank observations. His stature as the oldest member raised him to the position of pro-tem speaker in 1991, 1996, 1998 and 1999.

Rising from grassroot levels in the Communist Party of India, Shri Indrajit Gupta was made General Secretary of CPI in 1990. He held the office for six years until 1996. An active trade unionist, he had earlier been General Secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress. He was Vice-President of the World Federation of Trade Unions and was elected its President in 1998. Though born in a well-to-do family, which had given a number of civil servants, both before and after the freedom, Indrajit Gupta found himself powerfully drawn towards the downtrodden and exploited masses. He voluntarily chose to identify himself with the working class and the toiling masses that are the very salt of the earth.

Shri Indrajit Gupta's Lok Sabha victories have always been marked by big margins. During his long years in the Lok Sabha, he had worked in a

*Former Chief Minister of Uttarakhand.

number of Parliamentary Committees and chaired the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence. With special interest in economics and foreign affairs, Gupta penned a few books on these subjects. These include *'Capital and Labour in the Jute Industry'* and *'Self Reliance in National Defence'*.

Personally, I would like to express my gratitude to Shri Indrajit Gupta for his strong support for the creation of the Uttarakhand State. Participating in the debate on the Uttarakhand Bill in the House, he opined: "I think that the sentiment of the people has been expressed during this whole movement. This movement for Uttarakhand, which went on for a long time, has given expression to tremendous feelings among the people. I also had occasion to visit Uttarakhand area a few times..... I found that the people, especially women of that area, are so much aroused and worked up because of their sentiments in favour of Uttarakhand and their refusal to continue to be a part of Uttar Pradesh. You cannot deny this type of a feeling among the people."

Appreciating the people of Uttarakhand, he mentioned: "There are a large number of ex-servicemen and soldiers who are here in this area, especially in Kumaun and Garhwal. It is a factor, which should be kept in mind and taken into account. They are very brave people and courageous people who sacrificed a lot for the sake of the country."

In his 37 years as a Lok Sabha member, he stood for principles and deep commitment to values. On his death on 20 February 2001, President Shri K.R. Narayanan paid homage to this outstanding parliamentarian by saying: "A brilliant and veteran parliamentarian and a true leader of the people, Shri Indrajit Gupta remained at the vanguard of the Communist movement in our country and fought for the rights and freedoms of the people, especially the underprivileged, till the very end of his life. He enriches parliamentary proceedings and debates with his passionate espousal of public cause, his eloquent oratory and subtle and penetrating wit. In his long and eventful public life, marked by disarming simplicity, uncompromising integrity and honesty, Shri Gupta earned the affection and respect of all people who came into contact with him, cutting across the political parties and ideologies."

INDRAJIT GUPTA AS I KNEW HIM

*—Chaturanan Mishra**

Comrade Indrajit Gupta was elder to me by six or seven years but he was much more senior in the Party (the Communist Party of India). I first met him at Asansol in 1945 in a coal activist meeting of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC). Even at that time he enjoyed a great respect. He was a Cambridge product who sacrificed government career and joined the Communist movement. In trade union, he started work in the jute industry. Despite being a Bengali he spoke Hindi fluently even at that time. He was a good orator in mass meetings.

I had the privilege of working with him in the trade union. He was the General Secretary of AITUC and I was the President for two terms. In international politics both of us were supporters of the Moscow line and opposed to the Chinese line under Mao. This caused the break up of the relationship between the CPI and the Chinese Communist Party which was followed by the break up of our trade unions relations also. Subsequently, when the Cultural Revolution ended, the China Federation of Trade Unions invited the AITUC delegation to visit China where trade unions were again formed. Com. Indrajit Gupta wanted an AITUC delegation to go to China but the problem was—who will lead it? In the secretariat meeting of the AITUC he raised this question. I offered and went there in delegation which subsequently succeeded to re-establish relations between the trade unions of both countries and also of the two parties. I mention this to emphasize that Com. Indrajit Gupta was never of a one track mind or a sectarian. Despite strongly opposed to the Chinese line, he allowed this.

Politically, he was very alert. When Advaniji was on Rath Yatra from Somnath Mandir, then Indrajit Gupta and Prime Minister Shri V.P. Singh discussed it and decided that Advaniji be stopped in Bihar and not allowed to go to Uttar Pradesh where, on the Babri Masjid issue people were worked up. Indrajit Gupta accompanied me to the Chief Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad in Bihar Bhawan. The Chief Minister wanted central force, which was agreed to by the Prime Minister. I had to accompany the Chief Minister to Bihar where the Rath Yatra, as is well known, was stopped.

*Former Union Minister of Agriculture.

It is he who first said in a joint rally of the CPI(M) and the C.P.I. that both should unite as one since the country needs bigger national parties.

Another front where I worked under Indrajit Gupta was in Parliament. Com. Indrajit Gupta was a very popular leader and was elected eleven times to the Lok Sabha. He emerged as a national leader. He used to be in constant touch with his constituents. In the Lok Sabha, he was not used to shouting; not was he a phrasemonger. He enjoyed high respect and patient hearing in the House. He was very sober. He never went to well of the House. His arguments were based on reasoning. He used to have deep knowledge of the subjects he was dealing with in his speeches. He had a deep knowledge of matters pertaining to national defence. He was in Business Advisory Committee, Petitions Committee, and so on. He also worked in Rules Review Committee of the Lok Sabha. In every Committee, his contribution was marked and ultimately in 1992 he was given the honour of the Outstanding Parliamentarian. I was with him in the Eleventh Lok Sabha only when both of us were in the Cabinet of the United Front Government. As a negotiator from the government side, he succeeded in settling the complicated issue of implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission recommendations, even when the Finance Minister was not in favour of it because of some personal attack on him in the government employees' meeting. This saved the government from impending countrywide strike. During his Home Ministership communal peace reigned in the country.

I was in Rajya Sabha for twelve years. Com. Indrajit Gupta was the leader of the parliamentary group of CPI of both the Houses. I found his advice always practical and reasonable.

All this shows as to how in the Opposition, Indrajit Gupta contributed to strengthen parliamentary democracy in India.

Our Constitution provides that every citizen can contest elections but the election expenses are so high that only *crorepatis* and *arabpatis* can contest elections. In the present Lok Sabha nearly half of the members, according to their own submissions, are *crorepatis*. One way to solve the problem is to provide election expenses by the government. A Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Indrajit Gupta was set up to suggest as to how to solve this problem. The Indrajit Gupta Committee submitted very valuable suggestions and it is for the government to implement them.

In the present situation in the country when the national parties are growing weak and caste based regional parties under personality cult are coming up, mature parliamentarians like Indrajit Gupta are badly needed.

INDRAJIT GUPTA: AN EXCEPTIONALLY GIFTED PARLIAMENTARIAN

*—L.M. Singhvi**

I came to know Indrajit Gupta as a fellow parliamentarian in the Third Lok Sabha (1962-64). He was an exceptionally gifted M.P., gifted with an incisive clarity of mind, all his own unique powers of articulation which were, by common consent, exceptional and extraordinary. When he rose to speak in the Lok Sabha, he brought to bear upon the debate and the discourse his "No Nonsense" approach, his analytical mind and his oratorical prowess. There was a depth and resonance in his voice, a musical timbre of depth, pitch and intensity of sincerity and conviction, of persuasion and perspective. *I was privileged to work with peers like Professor Hiren Mukerjee, Indrajit Gupta, Nath Pai, H.V. Kamath and Prakashveer Shastri who made parliamentary discourse a veritable intellectual and cultural treat. Everyone of them was a shining star. Indrajit spoke less often than many of us but when he spoke, he spoke with a rare mastery of facts, with implacable conviction, authority and with a remarkable synergy with the mood of the House. Rarely was he interrupted. He always stood his ground in the debate. He spoke to make a point and not merely to speak for the sake of speaking. He was unerring in reaching his target. Urbane to the core, he was a rare gentleman in politics who could not tolerate trivialization of the national discourse. We struck a friendship which I cherish. His commitment to the cause of the common man, the deprived and the disadvantaged, the oppressed and the underprivileged, always stood out and carried conviction.

During the period I was India's High Commissioner in the United Kingdom, I was keen to have him as my guest but he kept postponing it for the right occasion. I always made it a point to meet him when I came to Delhi during the seven years that I was in Britain. Exchanging notes with him was intellectually stimulating. He was a good listener and was always willing to see the other point of view. He was perfect in his quips and repartees, ever mistrustful of authorities even when he was himself the Home Minister. During the good old days, during our time together in the Third Lok Sabha, sitting in the Central Hall, surrounded by friends and sipping his coffee, he would regale the company with good humour and hilarity. During one of

*Eminent jurist, constitutional expert, former MP and High Commissioner of India in UK.

those lighter moments, I said I would like to imagine the lonely lion (that is what I called him light heartedly) tamed (I meant, tamed by marraige) and to see him as a Minister replying to parliamentary questions. That did happen as if to make my prophesy true. When I said that, smiling but somewhat serious, he replied "Aren't you my friend? And if you are, why do you want me tamed, framed and bonded?" There was laughter all around in which he too joined.

INDRAJIT GUPTA : AN OUTSTANDING LEADER OF THE MASSES

*—A.B. Bardhan**

It is with a feeling of deep satisfaction that I am writing this.

Indrajit Gupta entered Parliament in the course of a by-election in 1960. Thereafter, he got elected every time, except only once. He spent 37 years in the Lok Sabha and was its seniormost member for quite a number of years. During these 37 years he had literally made hundreds of speeches, intervened in debates, asked thousands of questions and used every parliamentary device to focus attention on burning issues. He was always one of the most active members of Parliament. If one were to collect all that from the parliamentary records, it would add up to a few thousand pages. Com. Indrajit never spoke without any cause, or just for the sake of record. Indrajit was always a gentleman even while dealing with opponents, and his retorts were models of how to deal with interruptions without losing temper or balance. Members who are new to the game have much to learn from these examples.

He spoke as a Communist, as a spokesman of his party, as a disciplined soldier, and not as a freelance debater airing personal views and opinions that signified nothing. He made his mark not by breaking parliamentary rules and conventions, but by skilfully using them to drive home his point. It is all this that earned him the award as the 'Outstanding Parliamentarian' in the very first year it was instituted. He knew that he owed this eminence to the party. Therefore, he donated the entire amount, which accompanied the Award, to the party coffers.

To be able to savour and appreciate Indrajit Gupta's speeches in Parliament, their general content and tenor, we will have to see what moulded his thinking, inspired his reactions to events at the national and international level, and shaped his world outlook. Though born in a well-to-do family, which had given a number of civil service officers, highly placed officials in the administration, both before and after freedom, Indrajit Gupta found himself powerfully drawn towards the downtrodden and exploited masses. He voluntarily chose to identify himself with the working class, the toiling masses that are the very salt of the earth.

---

*General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (CPI)

He had been sent by the family to England for higher studies. He was in England during very turbulent times, at a turning point in history. Events in Europe and the colonial world were fast moving towards a denouement. The world as a whole was in the throes of an intense upheaval. Fascists in Italy and Germany had seized power. The Spanish Civil War had broken out, triggered by the fascist forces and officer corps in the army with the full material backing of Hitler and Mussolini. The desperate battle fought by the Spanish Republicans had unleashed a worldwide movement of solidarity. Volunteer fighters from many countries, including many renowned writers and intellectuals joined the International Brigade that stood up against the fascists. But the bourgeois governments of Britain and France betrayed the Spanish Republic through the so called policy of non-intervention.

Having succeeded in installing a fascist government in Spain, Hitler and Mussolini started planning a new offensive against other countries in Europe, and against the Soviet Union in particular. The threat of a new world war, which would be more devastating than the First World War loomed on the horizon. The imperialist dogs of war were straining at the leash, trying to get at each other's throat. A section of them, however, preferred to pursue a policy of appeasing Hitler and turn his aggressive drive towards the East, in a sort of crusade against the Bolshevik bulwark. The Soviet Union, however, stood like a rock thwarting the mad ambitions of the fascists. History has recorded what turn all these moves eventually took, and what was the ultimate outcome..... England was the political centre then and all these moves and countermoves influenced the thinking of the group of Indian students who were there at the time.

At the same time, developments in India were occupying the minds of these students abroad, just as they were stirring up the students and youth, and all sections of people, back home. The period, 1936 onwards was a stormy period in India's struggle for national liberation. Not only within the Congress and the Congress-led movement, but also beyond it, there started a series of mass awakening, movements and organisations. Students, kisans, writers and others launched their mass organisations and powerful movements began to be launched. The trade union movement gathered strength. The Communist Party of India, founded in the twenties, took a qualitative leap in its spread and influence all over the country. India was preparing to enter the final and decisive stage of its battle for freedom. The British imperialists were still striving to retain their grip over India and its far-flung empire. They could not yet see and decipher the writing on the wall.

Side by side, there were sinister divisive moves. The 'two nation theory' based on religion began to be seriously touted. Eventually, it grew into the demand for partitioning the country and creating a separate Pakistan.

In the debates and discussions that frequently took place both on national and international developments within the Indian student community, Communists were in the forefront. Such is the force of the emancipatory ideas of Marxism, it drew young Indrajit towards it as if by a powerful magnet. Like his other compatriots in England, he came to realise the truth that Marxism alone could illumine the way towards a brave new world of peace, freedom, democracy and socialism.

Most of these young people, when they returned to the mother country, plunged heart and soul into the Communist movement, and later on emerged as the leaders of the CPI.

Indrajit Gupta too returned home, not as a future high official in the administration, but as one determined to pursue the path of Communist revolutionaries. Straightaway from the ship that brought him to India's shores, he came and enrolled in the Communist Party of India as a whole time cadre. Never once did he waver from this path during the 60 long years of activity that followed.

It look him from the comforts of an affluent existence to the uncertain life of a revolutionary. It took him to underground life and prison. It took him to the slums and shacks of workers, where the party sent him to organise the trade unions.

Soon his talents as an organiser and trade union leader manifested themselves. His obvious sincerity and straightforward talk, his modest and sober language rather than any oratorical flourish and demagogic posture, identified him with the working class, even the most backward sections among them. It is these qualities and his complete identification with the working class which brought him to the top of the trade union movement in India as the General Secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) for ten years, and from there to the Presidentship of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Trade unionists here and abroad recognised in him a sincere friend, a talented leader, one who believed in the solidarity and unity of the Indian and the world Trade Union Movement.

Through all the eventful days during the 60 years of his political life, he never for once compromised with principles, never for once gave up his gentlemanly approach and decency of behaviour, and that is what endeared him to friends and foes alike.

Sometimes he could be curt and brusque, even impatient on occasions. But never was there any bias or malice, so that it was easy to go along soon after. There is talk nowadays about morality, ethics, code of conduct for MPs and so forth. Indrajit can claim to be a model. Let it also be remembered that

he was among the first who raised the issue of criminalisation of politics, and called upon parties first of all, to deny tickets to criminals.

For a period of 18 (eighteen) months, he was the country's Home Minister in the United Front Government. Amongst his major contributions in that capacity were the revival of the Inter-State Council as provided in the Constitution, the report of electoral reforms (known since then as the Indrajit Gupta Report), and special attention, along with Prime Minister Deve Gowda's initiatives towards the North-East. Each of these found echo within the Parliament.

Again and again, as the General Secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress, he stressed the theme of uniting the central trade unions,—at least to begin with those who swore by the Red Flag and Socialism. He was sad that this was not being achieved, though under the pressure of circumstances, united actions were taking place and united platforms were emerging. When he took over as the General Secretary of the CPI, he spoke again of the need for Communist unity. Here again the goal remains distant. This too remained a matter of regret for him.

I have written at length about his role as a leader of the working class and our people, because that is the foundation of his parliamentary work and eminence. One has to know this background to be able to understand what moulded his thinking and shaped his outlook. It is the cause of the common man, and the vision of a democratic and socialist future for the country, the vision of a secular country, that have been the substance of his speeches in Parliament. Indrajit dealt with a wide variety of subjects, all intimately connected with the life of the nation and of our people.

He spoke with knowledge on national and international developments. His interventions in debates on foreign affairs reflected the Communist Party's spirit of internationalism, of solidarity with all peoples fighting for independence and social progress, with countries that have opted for socialism and are ruled by communist and left parties, and with the struggle for peace. He took keen interest in speaking on matters connected with the country's defence and its relations with neighbours. He spoke with intense passion on issues that concerned the workers and employees, the *kisans* and agricultural workers. He ardently upheld India's secular democracy from attacks by communalists and fundamentalists of all hues.

That is how he made a mark in Parliament, second to none. With his studious approach, and sober speeches and interventions on all vital questions that concerned our country and our people, he was invariably listened with rapt attention by both sides of the House. He was indeed a people's tribune inside Parliament.

PART III
SELECT SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT

PARLIAMENTARY AND POLITICAL ISSUES

THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS (APPRECIATION OF SERVICES) BILL, 1971*

Sir, first of all, I would like to congratulate Shri Shibban Lal Saksena for having brought forward this Bill on a subject which cuts across all party and political differences, I think. It is a matter, of course, which has been raised in various forms in both Houses of Parliament on more than one occasion but still the necessity remains to agitate it over and over again because, as the speakers who preceded me have said, we are all very much dissatisfied still with the way the Government is handling this problem and the Government's attitude.

Sir, I consider it an auspicious thing, perhaps, that you happen to be in the Chair today when this subject is being debated. I am optimistic enough to hope that under your chairmanship the Government will take this measure with the seriousness which it deserves and change its attitude and respond much more open heartedly to what is the unanimous desire of all members and indeed of the people of our country outside.

I do not wish to add very much to what Pandit Dwarka Nath Tiwary has said about the sufferings of hundreds of thousands of valiant fighters for freedom who are living lives of privation today anonymously—their names are not known to us even now—in different parts of the country. But whenever this subject comes up our minds turn again to the legendary heroes of the past whose names are known and have gone down in our history books, whether it be the Sikh prisoners of the Lahore conspiracy case during the First World War, whether it be the heroes of the Chittagong armoury raid, whether it be the comrades in arms of Bhagat Singh or many others. They are well known to all of us.

I would like to say that this is not a question of giving assistance by way of charity to some people because they are suffering today or are in privation or have not go enough to get themselves two square meals a day.

*** *** ***

I do not want to put this question on the plane of that sort of assistance to the needy, assistance to the distressed and all that. I think, it is derogatory

* Participating in the discussion on the Freedom Fighters (Appreciation of Services) Bill, 1971; *L.S. Deb.*, 3 December 1971.

to our national self-respect to discuss this problem at all from that angle. It is not a question of that. It is a question of redeeming our debt to these people. It is a question of giving them some national honour, of letting the country know that these are the people who, when the need came for it, when the call came for it, sacrificed their everything for the sake of the Motherland. It is not a question of helping somehow to rehabilitate themselves. It is a question of elevating them to the position of honour which they deserve. A grateful nation should treat these things not even as a pension. Shri Saksena's* Bill speaks of pension. I would say it should not be called even a pension. It should be some sort of a national honorarium which is awarded to these people for the services that they have rendered. I am afraid this is not the attitude that is being taken by the Government of India at all.

In the few minutes at my disposal, I wish to deal with one particular aspect of the question and that is regarding those prisoners who were sentenced by the British to what was known in those days as *Kala Pani Ki Saza*, the *Kala Pani* which separated them from their Motherland, the *Kala Pani* which separated them from their near and dear ones because they were considered to be the most dangerous criminals in the eyes of the British Government. Those brave youngmen who were sentenced to transportation for life or for other rigorous terms were locked up in the dark dungeons of the Cellular Jail in Andamans, that notorious jail of the Andamans. I know they do not exhaust the list of prisoners of freedom fighters of this country. There are many more than hundreds and thousands who suffered equal hardships in other prisons and were even deported outside India to other places. But I wish to focus your attention to this because of a particular problem which has been brought to my notice regarding these ex-Andaman prisoners. Perhaps, you know, Sir, that due to the persevering endeavours of an Association of long-term convicted and deported freedom fighters which is known as Ex-Andaman Political Prisoners Fraternity Association, they went on pleading with the Government, making representations to the Government, and at long last, in 1969, only two years ago, after 22 years of Independence, the Government took a certain decision. The decision is as follows—I am quoting from the Government Notification on the subject:

> "The Government of India has sanctioned from 2 October 1969, a scheme for grant of pensions in deserving cases...
>
> —kindly mark these words "in deserving cases"—
>
> "...to those freedom fighters who had suffered imprisonment in the Andaman and Nicobar Island for a period of not less than 5 years and also to their families in case freedom fighters are no longer alive.

* Referring to Shri Shibban Lal Saksena, MP

> The Government has further decided that the scheme would be extended to all the freedom fighters who had suffered imprisonment in the Andamans irrespective of the period of their stay in the Cellular Jail provided the total period of their imprisonment is not less than 5 years."

If he has suffered imprisonment for 4 or 3 or 2 years, his name is to be struck off the roll of freedom fighters in the eyes of our Government.

This was the first position they took, a thoroughly bureaucratic attitude. This is not an attitude worthy of leaders who claim to be sitting in the Government as inheritors of the legacy of those freedom fighters. It is an attitude of civilians, of bureaucratic officials and many such officials who had served the British Government and also remain to serve this Government after 15 August 1947.

Then there was further agitation, further pressure, by this Association of Ex-Andaman Prisoners and it was taken up in both the Houses. In the Rajya Sabha, on 5 December 1969, Shri Bhupesh Gupta had said:

> "I think, the Government should declare a general scheme of pensions for them. There should be no discrimination."

Why should financial and other things be brought in? It is no good. Because the 'deserving' is defined to be that he must be a person who is really financially very badly off. 'Then we will help him'. So, the attitude is one of giving assistance, charitable aid to somebody who is badly off, not that, that he requires recognition for the sacrifices he has undergone for the country. In reply to Shri Bhupesh Gupta, Shri Y.B. Chavan, who was then the Home Minister, had this to say in the Rajya Sabha:

> "As far as financial conditions, etc. are concerned, whenever financial scheme is sanctioned by Government, by way of abundant caution, they put in all these things. But, certainly, we will take into account the suggestion that has been made."

Then, Sir, if I may be given the liberty to quote, this matter was raised also in the same debate by Shri Raj Narayan in that House. To him, Shri Chavan replied as follows:

> "Government of India feel that here they have to treat a special class of people who had suffered when they were sent to transportation to the Andaman jail. Therefore, we tried to prepare a special scheme for this. I would say that it is not that I am trying to oblige them. It is nothing like that. It is the duty of a grateful nation towards the Freedom Fighters. It is in that spirit that this is being done."

This is what he stated on the floor of the House. Then, after some agitation, that restriction that was there that they must have served a minimum of five years in the Andamans, that was removed. That was the first victory, if you like to call it, of this agitation. But when they were thinking that now at least everybody would get whatever pension of Rs. 200 or that something will be given, then it was found that again the list was screened and it was said that certain people are deserving and certain other people are not deserving on the basis of financial considerations. If somebody in his middle age or after middle age, by his own efforts, has managed to earn a little livelihood for himself somewhere by setting up a small shop or by getting into some office or firm and as a result of which he earns Rs. 400 or Rs. 500 a month at the age of 55 or 57, that for the Government of India is a disqualification. He must be absolutely penniless, indigent, starved, in tatters. Then only, the Government of India will come forward to give him help. What is this? What kind of attitude is this? This is the attitude of a miser, the attitude of a *bania*, towards people who gave their everything when it was required, for the country.

Then, Sir, it was found that this deserving clause has been applied and as a result of that, I am told now, that even now from the list of the Ex-Andaman prisoners which has been verified by the Government, some 15 or 16 people only have been left out on the ground that they are working somewhere, in some job. I have got a list here, a full list, and I find from the list that 16 people have been left out—the youngest age is 54 and the oldest is 82. In any case, they are not going to live very long and even for saving money on these 15 or 16 people the Government refuses to pay them this pension. I am willing to concede that if any individual among them is so well-off that he does not need this Rs. 200, then you need not pay him anything. But, in any case, it should be offered to him not for the money, but, for the honour and if he does not require it, it should be his option to say, 'I don't require it. Thank you very much. I don't need it.'

But I don't know whether there are any such rich people among them. If there is a person earning Rs. 500 or so, that also when he has already reached the age of superannuation, they will not continue to earn after one or two years. Many of them will not live much longer.

The Bill here talks of a recurring expenditure. Of course it is a recurring expenditure. But, from year to year, it is going to dwindle, go down, because time is taking its toll. The number of people who are going to be eligible is continually going down.

*** *** ***

I might say here that a deputation of this ex-Andaman Political Prisoners Fraternity Circle met Shri K.C. Pant a few months ago. Shri K.C. Pant assured them that he would see that the handful of remaining cases, numbering between 15 and 20, those that had been set aside on grounds financial, would be favourably dealt with. This was in July, last year. But up to date, nothing has been done about it. If I may remind you, Sir, on 14 December, last year, Shri Tiwary*, himself an ex-Andaman freedom-fighter, now sitting in the Chair here, also spoke in this House and he said:

> "So far as Andaman prisoners are concerned, I can say, most of them have been sanctioned pension, but 14 cases are of those who are financially better off and they have not yet been sanctioned."

The reply that Shri K.C. Pant gave to him was:

> "We shall consider those cases who are financially better later on; we are considering these cases."

So, all these assurances were given last year, but up till now, nothing has been done about it.

I would like to point out that the whole attitude of the Government has been a parsimonious attitude; it is not a generous attitude at all; by 'generous' I do not mean in terms of funds, because that has nothing to do with generosity; it is a question of giving them their long-overdue honour which they require. If anybody is financially so well off that he does not require money, I think he will be a man of sufficient integrity to say so. It is a question of his honour. After all, Government are going to give them only about Rs. 200. So, what is the great thing involved in it? It was because of the activity of some of these ex-Andaman prisoners that their cases had been brought to the notice of Government and something has been done, and up till now, pension has been given to about 250 people. But as my hon. friend Shri D.N. Tiwary has pointed out, in the history of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, were there only 250 prisoners? Certainly not; we all know it. Of course, many of them may no longer be living. But it is a big job to find out who those persons were, and to get the verified list from the records and from the archives of Government, unless the persons concerned themselves come forward, which many of them may not be in a position to do. But anyway, in regard to the cases which have been brought to the notice of the Government at least, there is no dispute now and they were Andaman prisoners. So, why are those 15 or 16 people left out in this kind of commercial attitude towards them? I hope that this attitude will change.

---

* Referring to Shri D.N. Tiwary, MP

I do not wish to take up more time. I fully support the views expressed by Shri D.N. Tiwary here that all freedom-fighters, irrespective of whether they were in the Andamans or in any other jail or not, and as my hon. friend Prof. S.L. Saksena has said in his Bill, even those who had been injured, those who had lost their belongings or whose family members had all been killed, must all be rewarded in the sense that they should be given proper recognition by way of honouring them for the services that they rendered to the country.

As far as this Bill is concerned, I support it wholeheartedly. But I would plead with the Government not to take exception to this Bill, on the ground that some clause or some provision is not suitable or something of that sort. The provisions of the Bill can be gone into and can certainly be studied more comprehensively and be suitably amended, if necessary and can be modified. I would suggest that this can be done by sending this Bill to a Select Committee. But let the Government accept the principle behind it. If they accept the principle, the whole House will co-operate with them in working out a suitable and practical course to implement this properly. But the Government should not reject this Bill outright and they should not compel Prof. S.L. Saksena to withdraw it on pain of defeating it by vote. Nobody wants to go in for voting on a Bill like this, because if we do it will be a disgrace to us. I hope Prof. S.L. Saksena also will not withdraw it, and I hope that the Government will have the good sense after so many years to accept the principle behind it and to agree to set up a small Select Committee which can take time and go into the details of the matter and frame a proper scheme which will give the long-overdue honour to these heroes of the past.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, whether any particular individual at a particular moment of time will derive any advantage or benefit from these amendments or not, does not affect, in any way, the actual merit of the amendments. We have to judge the merit.

*** *** ***

Let me say it quite clearly. If the Prime Minister or any other individual, who may be involved in a particular case or something like that is going to derive any advantage through these amendments, well, so will anybody else for that matter. These are not amendments which are drafted in such a way that they can only help the Prime Minister and nobody else. I do not understand, I don't think there is anything concealed or hidden about it. Shri Mohan Dharia seems to think that because the Prime Minister is involved in certain proceedings before the court, and these amendments may help her, go to her advantage, therefore, these amendments are bad and should not be accepted. Everybody knows that. Everybody in the country has got some common sense. Everybody in the country knows why it is being brought now. What is wrong with it?

*** *** ***

It is a fact that the proceedings before the Allahabad High Court have thrown up certain issues and certain questions which everybody must admit now are not sufficiently clear in the law as it stands. The law does not put, beyond doubt, what should be the actual position regarding those questions. I think these questions were never thrown up in any previous election petition case, but, for the first time, they have been thrown up. And certainly if the amendments seek to put beyond a shadow of doubt what the position in law should be regarding these particular two or three points, I don't see what is wrong in it; that is all to the good. But, as far as my party is concerned, of course, I do not share and we do not share that kind of concept—well, we do not like using these words—but the idea of a parliamentary set up, a parliamentary constitution and parliamentary democracy in which all these three institutions—the Executive, the Judiciary and the Parliament—are the three pillars on which our Constitution rests, and therefore all the three have got absolutely the same status and equal status, we do not accept this.

* Participating in the debate on a Motion for consideration of the Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1975; *L.S. Deb.*, 5 August 1975.

This Parliament represents the sovereign will of the people. We have seen, time without number, in the past that matters which have been decided by this Parliament, which have been legislated by this Parliament, are completely overthrown and upset by the will of some judge sitting in a court somewhere. And because that is the Judiciary—I have got all respect for the Judiciary—it should not be put on a pedestal higher than the Parliament which represents the sovereign will of the people. Then what kind of democracy will you have? In the same Court, different judges and different benches will give contradictory interpretations about the Constitution and various laws. We have gone through this experience from 1969 onwards. This battle was fought here. Several times we had to amend the Constitution only because of that.

These are not such fundamental issues as we had to deal with at that time. For example, this question as to from when it will be reckoned that a certain person is to be counted as a candidate or has held himself out as a candidate is not such a fundamental issue. At present, the position was such that anybody could interpret it in any way he liked. The Allahabad High Court has interpreted it in a particular way. It is entitled to do it according to law as it stood for so long. But ten other judges give ten different interpretations, ten other judgments, on that point. I know, some gentlemen used to sometimes issue statements in the Press saying, "I am going to stand from 15 constituencies simultaneously." I do not want to name anybody. Before the General Elections, one gentleman issued a statement saying, "I propose to contest from 15 constituencies."

Does it mean, in that case, that statement is to be taken as evidence of his having held himself out as a candidate in those 15 constituencies and, thereafter, he has to be held responsible for whatever happens anywhere in those 15 constituencies? It is ridiculous. Apart from any legal understanding of the position, I think, that common sense dictates that from the date when your nomination paper is accepted, you are the candidate. Before that, you may go about talking anything under the sun. Why should anybody take you seriously?

I am glad, Shri Gokhale*, has come forward with this amendment to the amendment. Yesterday, I was also wondering. There is a big gap between the notification of an election and the date of a nomination. It is an anomalous position. In that period, many things can happen. A person can change his mind; he can switch over from one constituency to another; he may decide not to stand for election. Anything can happen. So, this is the correct thing that has been done. This will apply to everybody hereafter. Whether it applies to Shrimati Indira Gandhi or not today, I am not concerned with it. It will

* Referring to Shri H.R. Gokhale, the then Minister of Law, Justice and Company Affairs.

apply to everybody hereafter. Otherwise, the court can give any kind of interpretation on this...

*** *** ***

As far as the proposed amendment to section 123 of the principal Act is concerned, regarding the Government officer discharging certain duties or providing certain facilities or making certain arrangements in the discharge or purported discharge of his official duty, the only point I wish to ask, as a clarification, is that in regard to all those classes of Government servants who are to be brought within the purview of this, where are the official duties prescribed *in extenso*? What exactly do you mean by "discharge or purported discharge of his official duty"? How is the court to judge that? Suppose a point comes up in a particular case, whether he has actually done it in the discharge or purported discharge of his official duty; is there such a compendious, all embracing, comprehensive prescription of the official duties of each of these classes of Government officers laid down by which the court can proceed? I do not know. How do you wish this thing to be properly decided upon? I am not quite clear.

About the appointment, resignation, termination of service, dismissal or removal from service also, I think, what has come to light is a ridiculous position. The arguments can go on before the courts for weeks together as to how it is to be proved whether a person has resigned or not resigned, when he resigned, when he tendered his resignation and when his resignation was accepted and all that. Whatever it is, the matter should be put beyond doubt. This cannot be a matter on which there should be endless argument. So, this amendment seeks to say that once it is published in the official Gazette, that should be taken as the conclusive evidence. That is a very fair thing. That should apply always. Why should this be open to doubt at all? I do not follow. This is the type of amendments which are here.

Shri Gokhale has explained the reasons for the latest amendment. Shri Mohan Dharia has said that he agrees with the general principle behind it that a person who may have committed a very small, technical default should not be subjected necessarily to the maximum penalty. The idea is quite sound. There is nothing wrong in that.

I do not think that the whole thing should be looked at only as Shri Mohan Dharia has sought to look at it. About taking away the Supreme Court's powers, well, I am all for taking away the Supreme Court's powers in many things, and I think, more things will come. I am not prepared to put the Supreme Court on a pedestal. The Parliament is supreme. The Parliament has to be supreme. Otherwise, say good bye to democracy. I do not share the view of those friends who always used to say that the Judiciary is supreme....

*** *** ***

I must say one thing. I partly agree with one idea which Shri Mohan Dharia seemed to be trying to project, and that is that, since we are discussing a Bill for reform or amendment of the electoral laws, I think this opportunity should have been taken by the Government with a little more imagination and foresight to include certain other provisions also. You may not be able to bring forward a total, comprehensive overhaul of the entire electoral laws just now, because you are not prepared; there can be no other reason. It is being discussed and discussed for a long time. Shri Gokhale will remember that, in the last Session, there were several meetings with the leaders of the Opposition, and many people had submitted their views in writing; printed memoranda and all that were given. There was enough time to process all these things and to come forward with some more important amendments, and we would have welcomed that. I am sorry this opportunity has been lost. Perhaps the Government will say that they are thinking of some Bill which they will bring in future and so on. But we cannot go on tinkering with these things every time—today do a little, piecemeal tinkering, and after two weeks a little bit and so on. I am afraid this kind of method is being adopted even with regard to the Constitution. It should not be amended every month or every 15 days. We should think out the things properly beforehand and come with all the amendments together.

Yesterday, my friend Shri Viswanathan,* and I were going through the Report of the Joint Select Committee on election reforms, and we found that there were some quite important and useful suggestions which were given by them as unanimous recommendations. The Joint Select Committee, including the members of the Government who were members of that Committee, had unanimously recommended certain things. I fail to understand why at least those few points could not be incorporated in this Bill. They were unanimous. Generally when a Joint Select Committee gives a unanimous report, it is accepted; generally, it is not amended or altered even when it comes before the House. And what were those five points which were unanimously agreed? One was that there should be a multi-member Election Commission. This was a unanimous recommendation. How it is to be constituted, how many members are to be there and all that can be decided later, but a provision could be made for a multi-member Election Commission. The second point that they had recommended was reduction in the voting age from 21 to 18 years. This was a unanimous recommendation, and I think that, in conformity with the spirit of the times, there is nothing which is more urgently required than this. Some people ask: how can anybody be mature enough at 18 to vote? The age of 18 is considered mature enough to be drawn into all kinds of agitations, and nobody seems to think then that they are immature. Anyway, this was a unanimous recommendation.

* Referring to Shri G. Viswanathan, MP

The third recommendation was that broadcasting time on the radio should be provided to all recognised parties as part of the election campaign. This was a unanimous recommendation. The fourth is with regard to electoral reforms. It is very very important, but not something which cannot be done; it is very easy. The recommendation is that electoral rolls must be corrected, revised, amended and maintained always up-to-date. This is very necessary. If you are to be fair to the voters, a provision has to be made that the electoral rolls are kept in a constantly up-to-date manner. The fifth recommendation is that the present ceiling on election expenses should be raised. This is a suggestion which the ruling party has also approved of in their party conclaves, the only one perhaps. What we feel very strongly is that when you are after a long time coming forward with an amending bill, this opportunity should have been taken; it would have been much better, much more feasible, much more presentable, practical and much more acceptable to the country at large, if you had incorporated at least these unanimous recommendations in this Bill. I am very sorry that this has not been done and this opportunity has been lost.

This Bill before us is a limited one with reference to certain limited provisions, but as I have already said, I see nothing wrong in those. I would also have been happy if a little more time was available to us to digest them better, but I do not think much material change would have come as a result of that. As a matter of fact, the whole of yesterday was available to draft certain amendments and I find certain amendments have been circulated.

We support this Bill, but I hope the Minister, in his reply, will tell us something as to whether they have given a go-by completely to the question of more radical reforms to the election laws, or whether they have anything concrete in mind or whether we can anticipate that in the next session we will have some Bill before us, that is very urgent and necessary.

With these words, we support this Bill.

THE CONSTITUTION (SIXTY-SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL, 1988 AND THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1988*

.....I read in the Press reports today that there was some sort of a competition going on in the discussion as to who could lay the earlier claim having made this demand for reducing the voting age from 21 to 18. Well, it is not a question of competition, but it is a fact that many parties have been demanding this reduction for many long years. I can say, our party has submitted it to the Election Commission at least 10 or 15 years ago. However, it is a good thing, soon or late, better later than never. We wholeheartedly support this. But then, there should be some logic in the whole thing. If you are prepared to reduce the voting age from 21 to 18, then why should we not also consider reducing the minimum age of the people who are qualified to sit in this House which is now 25? The people who are voting for them can be permitted to do so hence forward at the age of 18. I would suggest that the minimum age for people to be qualified to be members of Parliament and legislators which is at present 25 years should also be reduced to 21. There is nothing wrong. We should have a comprehensive outlook about this whole thing. Why do we think in this piecemeal fashion, I do not follow.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons has described the young people as being the present day youth; it says, they are literate and enlightened. Literate is not the accurate word. There may be many of them who unfortunately may not be literate. But that does not mean that they are not politically conscious. And he has also said that the present day youth are very much politically conscious. If he is politically conscious enough to cast his vote, there is no reason why he cannot sit in this House. And, therefore, I would suggest that you may come forward as soon as you can with some more legislation amending these things, because this is a very piece-meal type of exercise altogether and we want a more comprehensive bill. Anyway, my party fully supports this Constitution Amendment and we hope that you will come forward with some more ideas which will fit in with this whole idea of progressive legislation which will help to make the whole electoral system and the work of the legislators themselves more democratic and reflecting more clearly the actual sentiments and feelings of the people outside.

* Participating in the debate on the Motion for consideration of the Constitution (Sixty-second Amendment) Bill, 1988 and the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 1988; *L.S. Deb.*, 15 December 1988.

As far as the other Bill is concerned, of course there are so many points in it. Some of them are, I should say, more or less technical sort of points or procedural points. But I would just request the Government to see that how many of these changes which are being proposed, which look quite good on paper, many of them, not all of them—I am coming to that later—but those which look good on paper are really capable of being implemented on the ground. If they are not capable of being implemented on the ground, that means they are capable of being evaded without much difficulty. Then, simply incorporating them in the legislation will not only help in the long run but it may further erode the credibility of the whole system.

For example, you have been talking a lot about money power. There is nothing in this Bill which will really act as a deterrent against the misuse of money power. For example, there is no ceiling put on the election expenses to be incurred by parties. There is nothing. The sky is the limit. The donations by companies whether over the table or under the table will continue as before. So, actually how is this money power being exercised? How is it actually being brought into operation during the last many years which we have been seeing? There is nothing in this Bill at all to act as an effective deterrent to the misuse of money power. What have you put here? You have not even provided for the State funding, at least a portion of the expenses to be funded by the State which is a common practice now-a-days in many countries. At least they could easily make a provision for State funding, for providing the parties or the candidates with some of the technical requirements for which they have to spend money like voters' list, voters' identity slips, some amount of postage, some funding for transport purposes. Nothing is provided here. But without giving them anything in the way of State contribution, you are demanding that the parties must be registered. Why should be party be registered when it is getting nothing in exchange from the Government? If you are providing some amount of State funding, I can very well understand and I would support the idea of registration of the parties. But what for are you wanting them to be registered now? Moreover, much of the registration provisions also will not be implementable on the ground. For example, you have said that an application which is made by any party for registration should include various things, including a specific provision that the association or body shall bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India as by law established and to the principles of socialism, secularism and democracy. That means you want them to declare their loyalty to the Constitution. To that extent, nobody can take exception. If there is any party which is not willing to declare that it will abide by the provisions of the Constitution, well certainly it should not be treated as a party for the purposes of participating in elections. But what is the guarantee here that an utterly communal person or a communal party will not also declare that he

believes in secularism? Is there anything to prevent it? What is there to prevent any representative of one of the big business houses declaring that he believes in socialism? They are doing it everyday. These things have no meaning in actual practice.

Moreover, I noticed one of the papers today, of course may be with its own motives, has questioned the right of the Government to insist that every party must declare its loyalty to socialism. I have considered myself a believer in socialism, even more than socialism. But why should you insist? This argument may sound strange coming from me. But I think you must consider it. You want to compel everybody in every party to say that they believe in socialism, which they may not want to...

When the Swatantra Party was first formed and came to this House in fairly good numbers, could you expect the Swatantra Party to say that it must believe in socialism. Why is it so? They were not a party of socialism. They were a party against socialism....

*** *** ***

Anyway, in a parliamentary democracy where we have got pluralist system of political parties, even I can understand their saying that they must believe in secularism, they must believe in democracy. But why should you compel everybody to say that they believe in socialism?

Suppose he does not believe in socialism, will you exclude him from the voting process? I do not mind personally. You can exclude anybody who says that he is not in favour of socialism. But does it fit in with the concept of a pluralistic democracy which, after all, you are trying to function in this country? Do not do unnecessary things which are quite unable to be implemented on the ground. That is the point I am trying to make.

There is nothing here which says what are these other particulars. In clause 29A, sub-clause 6, it is mentioned that the Election Commission may call for such other particulars as it may deem fit from an association or a body. I do not support this kind of omnibus power being given to the Commission. What is the meaning of "such other particulars?" They may want to know so many things. If they want to know whether any party is regularly holding its inner-party elections, please put it here because that is very necessary for the democratic process. Many parties have got their constitutions in which it is written that they will regularly hold elections of their party body. But the first party to be de-registered on that ground would be the Congress Party which has not held its inner party elections for the last perhaps 10 years.

...Will the Commission have this power to ask every party organisation to state categorically not only whether in their constitution there is such a provision but whether in actual practice, they are adhering to it and regularly carrying out party elections? Otherwise, what is the meaning of it? I think, you should not fight shy of putting such things in here. It will strengthen the whole democratic fabric and all the parties concerned, I am sure, would agree to it.

Some friends, I find from the record, have already spoken about replacing the present system by a system of proportional representation. Therefore, I do not want to repeat those points very much. The reasons for it are quite clear. And it will apply to every party. It does not apply to a particular party. It applies at the Centre and it applies at the States also where different parties are ruling, but with a minority vote of 40 per cent, 45 per cent or less than 50 per cent are able to get a majority of seats and go on ruling for years together. Of course, at the Centre it has been happening all along. Is this a correct representation of democracy? Moreover, the present system puts a premium, a big premium, on considerations other than policies and programmes of parties like caste considerations, communal considerations, other types of considerations and giving priority to a particular individual, a personality rather than the party and its programme. These things are encouraged by the present system. That is why we have been always pressing for the introduction of the system of proportional representation or call it the list system or whatever it is so that focus should be on the policies and programmes of different parties. And that is the basis of it on which they should stand and fight and that is the basis on which the voter should make his choice. However, I know, you are not agreeing to that and you will not agree to that easily. However, we shall continue to press for this amendment in the Constitution so that the system can be really made more democratic. Many colleagues of mine have spoken about the Election Commission, that is to say, the selection and constitution of the Election Commission. This has become a very very sensitive and important matter now. The Election Commission as an institution should be held above all suspicion or any kind of doubts about its impartiality and functioning. That is essential. It is one of the fundamental, basic institutions on whose functioning depends the healthy conduct of all the elections in this country. Many things have happened in the recent past. I do not want to go into all that or to cast reflections on anybody, but at present we are not satisfied that the election Commission is always functioning in a manner which is really impartial and which is free of any kind of political influence or political pressures. That is not the case. Therefore, we have made suggestions. Here many amendments have also been tabled. I would like to know what is your specific objection to the suggestion that the Chief Election Commissioner, to begin with, should be a

person who is appointed either in consultation with the parties or let three people be given the authority—the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and one senior member from the Opposition. Let the three of them suggest the names. What is the wrong in it? That will make it much more impartial, looking at least, and would be more plausible that it is a body which is not likely to succumb to any kind of undesirable political pressures. But you are not considering any kind of reconstitution of this Commission. We do not want it to be a one-man Commission. One man, however honest and however well-intentioned he may be, but one man—any man, any individual—is always liable to make mistakes, to become a little bit subjective and to not act from strictly impartial and objective viewpoint. Therefore, we have suggested that there should be a three-man Commission or a five-man Commission. The Minister, I believe, has said that there is nothing to prevent it under the law. But nothing has prevented it all these years also. The point is that the Government does not seem to be at all inclined to make this Commission a three-man or a five-man Commission and to be selected in a way which will give greater credibility to its functioning as an impartial body which is so important for the whole process of democratic elections.

Connected with that has arisen the question of all officials who work during the period of elections, whether they are State Government employees or police officials and others, being considered to be on deputation with the Election Commission. This is what you have brought here as an amendment. If you make changes, as we are suggesting, regarding the composition and selection of the Election Commission, then this thing would be understandable, intelligible that all the staff, all these officers and officials, the Polling officers, Presiding Officers, police officers and everybody should be on deputation to the Election Commission. It is understandable. But not as things stand at present. Therefore, will the State Government come into the picture or not when the Election Commission decides, let us say, that in a particular State or a district or an area or a town, it is necessary to induct Central security forces during the election? What happens to the other provision in the Constitution that in order to induct Central para-military forces, if not to request the State Government, at least they should be consulted and their approval should be taken? But here you are making a blanket provision. What happens if the Election Commission says that we feel that for the proper conduct of elections, the CRP or the BSF or somebody has to be sent to a particular place? State Government does not come anywhere in the picture but then that will infringe on the powers of the State Government under the other provision of the Constitution. So, you please consider these matters carefully and do not rush ahead with things which, as I say, and again I repeat, will not be operable or capable of implementation on the

ground and will lead to more complications and troubles. Of course, the amending Bill is disappointing in the sense that it is a piece-meal effort; it is not a comprehensive thing. I am all in favour of the photo identity cards provided they are made for multiple purpose. Let me inform the Minister that in my constituency, not my present constituency, the constituency from where I contested first time that I came to this House in 1960 in a by-election, then the Election Commission tried this experiment in that constituency, Calcutta South West, for having photo-identity cards for all the voters. I had opposed it for practical reasons. The matter went to the High Court in Calcutta. The Court upheld the introduction of this system though it was only in one constituency at that time. What difficulty we faced? I think half the voters would never get photographed till the end, till the polling date came. Some professional photographers were enlisted and paid so much, they are able to take so many photographs during the day? So, they go about from house to house and in our country all sorts of people, different communities and classes are living in different sorts of areas. They turn up to take photographs during the day time. They cannot go about in night time. They go in day time and well generally menfolk are away at work. They have gone to offices or factories or somewhere. Only womenfolk are at home during the day time. The photographer comes along and says "I have come from the Election Body and come on I am going to photograph you". In some places pandemonium took place. He was chased away. I can tell you that I don't mean offence to anybody in my constituency, in Calcutta South West, there is one segment where a majority of the population belong to the minority community and turning up there in the day time when the men were away to take photograph of the Muslim ladies is an impossible thing. Nobody agreed that they were able to do it and I can quite understand it. Then somebody started some rumours saying that "don't allow yourself to be photographed. These photographs are being taken to regiment you into the army. You will be taken for military purpose. So, the men should not be allowed for photograph."

So, I think that this card is necessary for identity purposes. But it will only succeed if it is made for multiple purposes, that is, the card is used for other purpose like for rationing, etc. and for other purposes. Then people will have some incentive to get photographed. If you do it only for the purpose of voting in our country, in our society, I can tell you that a big section of the voters will be excluded and the photographs will never be taken. So, please consider this. About electronic voting machines, well provided they function properly they can be considered. I am told that they keep breaking down.

Lastly, Sir, I do not want to repeat the other points. I am in full agreement with what my colleagues here have said. But I would say one thing that you

have declared in this Bill, who are the categories of people who will not be allowed to stand. But you have not said anything about who are the people who will be allowed to stand. What about that? Even your list of people who will be excluded from standing is not at all comprehensive in this Clause 4 of Chapter-III where you have listed people who are convicted for offences under various Acts. Getting conviction is not a joke in this country as the Government knows. But anyway you have not mentioned the Prevention of Corruption Act. You have not mentioned the Official Secrecy Act. Why people who have committed offence under such Acts, let us say they have been convicted, even they have not been excluded. They have been allowed to stand. Why have you omitted that? ...If a person is convicted for not less than six months, then no harm. He may have been convicted under some of these Acts, but he has not been sentenced to more than six months. Then he is free to stand. He is a man of unimpeachable moral character in that case. But if the conviction is for a slightly longer period, then he falls within the ambit of this. So, I don't think all these things are going to make any difference on the ground. You have not said anything about people who are guilty of, let us say, infanticide. What about that? He may be, he won't come under this, or there may be; no amount of these prosecutions and convictions or non-convictions can prevent somebody from beating his wife at home. He can beat his wife at home. He can practise all kinds of reactionary or obscurantist social and religious practices, he won't come under all this. Why are you talking about secularism and all kinds of things?

I am talking about things which should be implemented in practice on the ground, whether you are capable of doing it or not. We have passed so many good Acts in this House about so many things. Are they implemented? Child labour, for example, are we able to implement? We cannot implement it. There are so many things like dowry. Dowry is made a legal offence. Are we able to stop dowry? So many things are there like that. That is why I am saying this. Finally, I would say one thing....

*** *** ***

I would suggest that every successful candidate, whether in the Assembly or Parliament, once he is elected and when he takes his oath, before he takes his oath, he must make a statement of his assets and that statement of assets must be laid on the Table of the House so that it becomes public property. The other day when I mentioned this point, I found a large number of people on the Treasury benches apparently supporting the idea. So, I suggest to them, 'Please take it seriously.' This is one of the sources of much of the kind of doubts and allegations and things which arise in the political life of this country. There is no use somebody saying, 'I have declared my assets somewhere or other' or 'I will declare them publicly'. No. When you are

elected as a member, your statement of your assets should be laid on the Table of the House, that is, to the Speaker. That means, it is being given to the Speaker, put on the Table of the House, being made the property of the House and of the public. That should be done and anybody who is found guilty of making a false statement of assets will have to be severely punished. If you want to cleanse the democratic life of this country, then kindly take it seriously. I very strongly feel about this matter of the declaration of assets. Nobody who has got a clear conscience should be afraid of it, whether from here or any part of this House.... So, kindly come forward with a more comprehensive Bill and do not bring in things which actually will never be able to be implemented.

That is all, I wanted to say.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me a few minutes.

Sir, we are, I think, present at a historic moment. We are witnessing the birth pangs of a new State. We are—I for myself and for my party—fully in support of the proposed new State of Chhattisgarh. One of the main reasons—not the only one—being, as has been already mentioned here, that it is a State dominated by tribal people or tribal population.

The whole question of a separate State is bound up with the whole question of development. It has no meaning for the people of that area—neither separate State nor autonomy nor anything else has any meaning for the people of that State—unless it has something to do with development, that is, development of the economy and development of democracy. If these two things are looked after, then alone, this separate State will have any meaning.

There is another area, that is the question of autonomy. I am not discussing that now because autonomy may have many meanings; we do not know what is actually meant by autonomy and what is the content of autonomy. A few years ago, we were witness to a big agitation and a movement in Kashmir under the slogan of *aazadi*. People said that they wanted *aazadi*. What is *aazadi*, we do not know.

Now we have the Sarkaria Commission Report which recommended devolution of powers—devolution, particularly of financial powers and financial resources, for most of the States or for all the States. The history of Jammu and Kashmir—I am not going into that now because there is no time—is very different to the history of most of the other States. We know that. The background is different. That is why, article 370 of the Constitution came into being. India is the homeland of different religions, different cultures, different languages and different problems; it is the homeland of many imbalances and uneven development.

This is what makes all States clamour for more and more devolution of resources and powers. Personally I am happy that this is happening. I have some acquaintance, though not much, with Madhya Pradesh. I am very happy that they are going to get this separate State. It is not a very poor State by

* Taking part in the discussion on the Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Bill, 2000; *L.S. Deb.*, 31 July 2000.

the way. Some of the biggest and viable public sector undertakings are situated in Madhya Pradesh. Iron ore mines are there in the district of Bastar. It is a tribal district and probably. I think they have the best quality of iron ore available in the country. Bharat Heavy Electricals is situated there which is a real asset to our country and to our economy. Bharat Aluminium Company is also there. All these things have to be looked after properly and they will certainly add to the viability and to the position or economy of the new State.

I would like to ask one question about which there was no mention in the Mover's speech. I do not know what the Minister or the Government is thinking about it. I am referring to the terrible tragedy that overtook Bhopal a few years ago from which the people of Bhopal have not yet recovered. I am referring to the leakage of gas. Thousands of people perished in that tragedy. Nothing has happened to that. Nobody was made guilty for it although the people there are of the opinion that the CMD of that American Company should be hauled up for gross negligence. But that also came to nothing. The question of compensation has not yet been solved. Everyday we are reading about it. Different organisations which are carrying on agitations for many years are demanding that proper compensation should be given to the victims of this terrible disaster. Even that has not been done. Now, you are going to have a separate State. Now, Bhopal, I presume would be the Capital not of Chhattisgarh but of the existing Madhya Pradesh. The victims of the tragedy which occurred in the existing Madhya Pradesh are still there. I would like to know what the Government has thought about this. Have they thought anything? I would like to know whether all these thousands of people and their families who will be reading about our debate here and listening to it and hoping that it may bring them some relief and some solace, will actually get any comfort from what we speak here as far as the question of compensation and rehabilitation is concerned.

So, I would like to know the Government's view about this. I do not know what Shri Shyamcharan Shukla's view is. He did not mention anything. I think this is the biggest blot on our past history which has international repercussions. I am sure you know about it. Bhopal gas disaster was something which had shaken the conscience of people of not only this country but so many people and organisations in other countries where they are demanding proper compensation and proper fixing of responsibility. It is considered to be a crime.

Apart from that, we are very happy that a new State of Chhattisgarh is being created. I congratulate the Government for having come forward with this Bill. I hope we can all work together and see that the State prospers and becomes a really useful asset to the map of India.

VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS*

Mr. Chairman Sir, the Prime Minister has asked for the confidence of this House in his Council of Ministers. The first question that I want to raise is this, for what is this confidence being sought? I raise this question because this discussion on the vote of confidence has come at a time or has been so fixed that the functioning of this Government is yet to unfold itself. So, it is not possible for anybody to give a vote of confidence in the abstract. We have to judge the Government on its merits and by its performance and functioning.

Therefore, I question whether this confidence is being asked for on the basis of whatever the Government has done or has not done over the few days that it is in office or whether it is being asked for in anticipation of what they propose to do during this year or during this budget session.

As far as what they propose to do is concerned, we have only got some bare outlines from some general disclosures which have been made on behalf of the Government and also from whatever is appearing in the Press. I will come to that later.

If it is a question of seeking confidence on the basis of whatever the Government has done and how it has behaved during these very few days that it has been in office, then I must say that that functioning does not inspire any confidence. I am talking here particularly and naturally because the main performance of the Government is yet to come. I am speaking about the style of functioning which is very very important. For a Government which is in a minority, a Government which requires. I suppose support if it has to keep itself in office, for such a Government the style of functioning is very important.

Shri Advani here referred, during his speech, to the occasions on which there was a minority Government in this House supported by other parties from outside. He referred more than once to the Government of Smt. Indira Gandhi after the split which took place in the Congress Party in 1969 and he mentioned that Government was sustained only because of refusal of some parties, including my party, to vote for the Vote of No-Confidence in that Government. It was a question of whether we should or we should not

* Speaking on the Motion of Confidence in the Council of Ministers headed by Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, the then Prime Minister, *L.S. Deb.*, 15 July 1991.

support a Vote of no-Confidence. Smt. Gandhi's Government at that time undertook some very important though controversial reform measures, including nationalisation of banks, the abolition of Privy Purses and some other measures which we broadly supported. Many people did not like those things and they opposed them. But there was some basis on which it was possible for us at least to say that we do not want such a Government, which is undertaking these types of measures, to be pulled down.

Sir, Shri Narasimha Rao's Government is behaving, in my opinion from the outset, as though it is not a minority Government at all but that is a Government enjoying a majority in this House and, therefore, is at liberty to take unilaterally all sorts of drastic measures which can have very far reaching and very serious fall-outs. As far as I understand, Sir, a minority Government if it wants support, has to function, whether it likes or not, on the basis of consultations and consensus and taking the Opposition or at least parts of the Opposition into confidence.

Everybody in the country agrees that there is a national crisis, perhaps of unparalleled magnitude, and I don't agree that it is only a crisis which concerns Shri Manmohan Singh only. Economic crisis is very grave. No doubt there is a financial crisis but there is also a political crisis; there is also a social crisis in the country.

We have also referred earlier to the protracted and seemingly insoluble problems. No Government has come forward yet with any solution of Punjab, Kashmir or of Assam. The problems of armed insurgency is cropping up in various parts of the country. Besides, in many States and in many outlying and backward areas of the country there is a growing feeling among the people of alienation from the central seat of power. Rightly or wrongly people in those areas do feel that they are not getting a fair deal; they are not getting the shares of the fruits of development and that they have been neglected. This is something which is vitally bound up with the whole question of Centre-State relations. But I don't find any reaction, any mention anywhere either in the President's Address. We are not debating the President's Address today but parts of it are bound to overlap for the simple reason that this debate is taking place now and President's Address has already been delivered and it is before us.

We in the Opposition did not appoint the Sarkaria Commission. At that time, the Government which appointed the Sarkaria Commission thought it at least sufficiently a serious matter to appoint a Commission to go into the whole gamut of Centre-State relations. That voluminous Report of Shri Sarkaria is gathering dust in the files. Not the least attempt has been made to process it, to discuss it with the Opposition to see whether the parts of that Report, the recommendations, can at least be implemented. Nothing,

but this Centre-State relations is a matter, which I think, this country can ignore now only at its peril. Therefore, I am saying that this Government is talking only about one aspect of the crisis, that is the question of financial deficit, budgetary deficit, balance of trade, foreign exchange crisis. All that I agree. They are there. They are very serious. The remedy which is being proposed, is a matter which is open for discussion and controversy. But what about the other problems which are hanging fire for a long-long time? I do not know whether this financial and economic crisis of the magnitude which we have been told has assumed now could really have developed just overnight. It could not have developed overnight, so that suddenly the Finance Minister has to say that unless we manage to get some short term loans from somewhere, we will not perhaps be able to meet our requirements, our expenditure, even in the month of July or we have to transfer some tonnes of gold as collateral security, we are told in foreign banks, in foreign countries so that that can act as a security to get some money otherwise, we are not in a position to carry on. Can such a situation develop overnight? It could not. This is something which has been developing over the years due to many factors, including reckless expenditure, reckless squandering of our resources and all kinds of populist measures. I am not blaming anybody in particular. Everybody had the share of this. Anyway, what I am trying to say, Sir, is this. We had a meeting in which the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister were very kind to call the Leaders of the political parties on the 27th of June where we were told that we would be taken into confidence and briefed thoroughly by the Finance Minister about the economic and financial part of the crisis. But on the 27th of June, in that meeting, we were not given the slightest inkling that within a very few days of that meeting, in two successive doses, depreciation or devaluation or whatever you would like to call it is going to be done. The value of the Rupee was going to be brought down by 21 per cent. No inkling was given of the fact that gold was going to be transferred because an earlier Government had transferred gold. Rather we were given to understand that this Government is not going to repeat that.

I am giving these examples to show—the Prime Minister may say that all these things cannot be revealed and that they are not going to tell all these things in advance to us—the seriousness of the situation. But I would like to say that if you want the Opposition to appreciate, as I think you do about the depth and the magnitude of the crisis, then you must put your cards on the table; otherwise, you cannot expect people to just swallow whatever is being told to them.

Therefore, my quarrel first is with the style of functioning which has been proceeding ever since then.

The Punjab elections were postponed thirty-six hours before the polling was due to be held. I do not know who is responsible for it. Somebody should tell us who is responsible for it. There can be endless controversy over whether conditions in Punjab were conductive to holding fair and free elections or not. I agree that there is a serious security problem also.

But there is also the dilemma that if we go on denying the democratic process to the people of Punjab and if we go on just depending on the President's Rule and the police raj, then also we have to consider whether that is eventually going to help the militants more or is it going to help the country in order to restore normalcy and peace. So, it is not a very simple problem.

I may remind you that the election process which began with the calling of names for the candidates and all that, was started in the Punjab simultaneously with the rest of the country, although, at that time also, the polling date for the Punjab was fixed on 24th of June, but the process began on the same day. So, an extended period was there during which if you were really so worried about the security situation in Punjab, you should have realised that this extended period would give the militants further opportunities and time to kill candidates whom they wanted to kill in order to get elections subotaged; and that was done. Some 25 or 26 candidates were killed. And then at the very last moment when 36 hours were left for voting, when the Governor of Punjab himself was saying that elections should be held in spite of the security problems, but they should be de-linked from the rest of the country so that after the elections in the rest of the country are completed, sufficient security forces can be mobilised in the Punjab, at that last minute, somebody decided that the whole process of elections in the Punjab should be stopped now. And now the whole thing has to be repeated all over again. I hope those unfortunate candidates who had been killed, at least during this period will be given adequate compensation for having foolishly got nominated as candidates not knowing that they were going to be killed in this way and no election will be held either. Somebody is botching up things. I do not blame the Election Commissioner; I do not blame the Government. We do not know actually what transpired. After the killing of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, when the election dates were postponed by three weeks, you remember there was a controversy which appeared in the Press also. The Chief Election Commissioner was asked, why did you do this? You could have postponed the election by some days, but why did you postpone it by three weeks. He said, I was following the Government's order. It was a dictation to him by the Government, the Government which was there at that time. "The Government dictated to me; I had no choice", he said. And the next day, a spokesman of the Government came out publicly saying that Shri Seshan's statement was absolutely baseless; no dictation was done to

him at all. Whom should we believe? What is going on, I do not know. So, we must be very sensitive and cautious about the way we handle this kind of problems.

We are faced with a serious sessionist insurgency which is threatening to take a region of this country out of the country and to set up some kind of theoratic or some independent State there.

So, up-till-now, I consider that the first thing this Government, since it assumed office, should have done is not to just hold meetings for one hour or two hours with the Finance Minister explaining things, as he chose to do; but they should have a series of meetings with the Opposition where all these various issues could be taken up and considered in depth; and the Government should tell us and also ask us our suggestions, our opinions, how they should deal with the matter and tell us what are the steps they propose to take. I do not want to elaborate this point any further. My point is that before the actual performance of the Government on the ground begins to unfold itself, we feel that the way they have been functioning from the beginning is not that of a Government which is a minority Government. If you were in a majority, I could understand you do not care for anybody else; you could do what you please. But, are you in that position?

Papers are speculating every day that this attitude of the Government may be due to the fact that they have still not given up hopes of covering that margin which is still there between them and the majority by recruiting some more allies here in the House. I do not know. I do not know whether there was that recruitment drive still going on or not. You please tell us about it. But if there is no chance of that—I don't think there is much chance...

...Then the minority Government should understand, should realise its own position.

It should act with a proper attitude and a proper outlook which it has not been doing.

Then, I come to the other question of why we are asked to give confidence to this Government in advance before they come out with all their package of measures. All we know about at the moment is that they are preparing to go to the IMF. That has been confirmed. They have gone to the IMF, not preparing to go. What the Finance Minister told us was that there is no other way to survive except to get a sizeable loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Now, apart from that, other things that they are proposing in the way of economic reforms, and so on are there. We have to depend largely on the

Press, on what economists are saying, what economic journals are writing, and so on. But my quarrel here is not that. Of course, reforms may be necessary. I do not deny it. When socialist countries can bring about such big reforms, some of them delayed too long, and paid the price for it, why not India? But the biggest of the socialist countries which initiated a very massive far-reaching programme of reforms, has also had to give up many things which they had adhered to in the past because the passage of time and changing conditions showed that those outmoded or old methods and techniques would not do and therefore they are doing away with them. I do not know where it will bring them in the end. But they are trying to bring about some basic reforms. So, it is not a question of reforms being something which we are against. But what I would like to say is that for the first time since Independence—I am addressing my remarks particularly to my friends on the Congress benches—the Government and the party. the Congress Party, is abandoning the ideological framework of the Nehru-Gandhi line of development within which it had sought to function all these years. This is my most serious charge against the Congress Party. I have to assume it largely from what we are trying to understand and study, because the Prime Minister never said a single word about when introducing this Motion. It may be your argument that things have changed so much in the world and India that all that old framework has to be given a go-by now. If so, you have to explain it here to the country and to the House. The rationale behind it has to be explained to the House and through the House to the people. I think Mr. Gorbachev, whatever his errors or mistakes or failings may be, he never hesitated to explain to his people and the Soviet Union what were those errors, what were those deviations, what were those mistakes committed under the old system which led their economy to a severe crisis. But here we are not told anything. It is just as though by magic overnight, yesterday everything was all right and today suddenly we find our coffers empty, we do not have a single pie to pay our debts. We are going to become a black-listed nation which is defaulting on its payments. There is no mention how it happened. Somebody must explain.

I am saying here, that a major departure is taking place. You may deny it. But I think in the weeks to come and sooner than later, it will be quite clear that under this Government a major departure is being carried out by the Congress Party to depart from the framework which it has followed from the time of Jawaharlal Nehru. I do not say, for a minute, that that framework or that line of development was perfect, that it had no blemishes, no mistakes or no short-comings. I do not say that. Changes may be necessary. But there was a broad framework and some basic concepts which I think were very much part of the Congress credo. And, if you decide to give up those things, you must explain to the country and the people why you are doing, and

what is the need for it. Otherwise, I do not know why Shri Advani* in his speech should say as he said here on Friday. I am quoting from the record.

> "The direction that the new Government has adopted is a direction with which my Party does not quarrel."

The BJP will say that. Why not? Why should he not say that?

Further, he said:

> "I would expect this Government to recognise its limitation...."

It is a good advice.

He continued:

> "...and to function in a manner as to start a new chapter in Indian political history."

Sir, the basic concepts may have to be changed. But you must explain how they have failed to meet the requirements of the situation. The concept of a planned economy, Shri Advani refers to it as statism, that is to say, the state controlling the whole economy. Have we ever had an economy like that? People say that India has made a big mistake by following the path of socialism. When did we follow the path of socialism? We, from the very beginning, followed the path of what we call the mixed economy, a state sector and a very flourishing private sector; and the state sector should be confined to certain areas of what we call the core sector or the public sector. This is not socialism. But now we are told that even this has to be diluted or watered down and some cases given up altogether. There was a concept that the commanding heights of the economy should be in the public sector. They should not be handled over to the private business people. What is the position now on that, I would like to know.

There is a Directive Principles Chapter in the Constitution which says that the Government, the State, is committed to take action to see that concentration of wealth does not take place in fewer and fewer hands. That is one of the Directive Principles of the Constitution, which is binding on us. All the Members of this House the other day stood and have taken an oath to uphold the Constitution and what is written in it. But the line you are proposing to follow of opening up completely to the private sector, to the monopoly sector, to the foreign capitalists, will lead to nothing but more and more concentration of wealth in the hands of a few big interests. So, that is another basic concept which is being given a go-by.

---

* Referring to Shri L.K. Advani, MP

Then, I come to the question of agrarian reform. I think, agrarian reform for some years now has been shelved completely. It was carried out in a limited way in the early years upto a certain point and after that it has become paralysed and nothing further happened. And the domestic market in this country, which is a vast market of many crores, hundreds of crores of people but with no purchasing capacity except for some people who live in the cities and towns have the means of purchasing consumer goods, durable goods and all that. The vast ocean of people living in our villages, in our rural areas, do not have any purchasing capacity at all. It was mainly for them we had always advocated land reforms accompanied by other measures like setting up agro-industries and all that so that the level of standard of living of the rural masses could be uplifted and they could get purchasing capacity and this big domestic market could be served by our own industries. Industries are complaining that they cannot sell their goods because they do not have markets. But the huge internal market in the country is lying here without being tapped properly.

Of course there is always a slogan of self-reliance, which may mean many things. I agree. But self-reliance does not certainly mean opening up your whole economy to more and more penetration by foreign capital by multi-national companies and all in the name of getting more technology, higher technology. It is being done in a limited way in some other countries also but subject to certain conditions and safeguards. Here, I do not know what conditions or safeguards, if any, we propose to impose.

Then, the curbs on monopolies—the papers are saying that the ceiling limit for the MRTP Act is going to be raised to one thousand crores of rupees. Any company whose investment limit is below Rs. 1000 crore will not come under the MRTP Act. Please tell us whether it is a fact or not. If newspapers are spreading baseless rumours it is your job as a Government to dispel those rumours and say "it is wrong: we are not going to do that". Newspapers are writing that companies which have an investment limit of Rs. 200 crore will not require any licensing after this. Hereafter the whole thing will be de-licensed. Even locational restrictions on the industries are to be removed. I am provoked to say this by seeing Shri Arjun Singh sitting in front of me because lack of locational vigilance, I would say, led to the disaster in Bhopal where a foreign multi-national company was permitted to set up in the centre of that congested part of Bhopal city and which led to the gas disaster in which how many thousands of people lost their lives or were crippled for life, we do not know.

Locational restriction is the most important thing in any country like India from the point of view of health and safety. But according to what we read in the papers one of the further concessions you want to give to people

as an incentive to come and invest is that there will be no locational restriction. God knows what we are in for after that. Such things are not permitted in the parent countries where those companies operate. In the United States of America, they would not permit that kind of a dangerous plant to be set up in a heavily congested area. But who bothers in countries like India and in Third World countries. These multi-national companies do not bother. Nobody is here to check them or control them and enforce any restrictions on them and we have this horrible tragedy.

The way things are going, you will beg my pardon, but from what impressions we were given by the Finance Minister in those talks on that day, it seems to me—I may be wrong—that you have virtually already given a sort of an assurance that whatever conditionalities IMF may seek from us we are prepared to accept them. It comes to that. I am worried because I am beginning to think that after some time we will find that special weight is being put on us to change our Patent Law, the question of Intellectual Property Rights where we have been standing up to these people and fighting for the last some years in the Uruguay Round of talks of the GATT. They will mount further pressure that the Patent Law must be amended and on Intellectual Property Rights they must be given freedom to enter our country. Are we going to agree to these things? Suppose, the IMF says that your defence expenditure must be reduced by so much, are we going to agree to this? I am all for reducing defence expenditure wherever it is possible and wherever there is wastage because it is an unnecessary expenditure. You can read the audit reports which are published every year about the Ministry of Defence and you will see how many lakhs and crores of rupees go down the drain. Certainly a great amount of money can be saved on that. But it is for us to do it. It is for India which understands its own security problems and security environment to do it. We could have done it on our own. Why should we wait for any IMF or some foreign agency to tell us that you must reduce your defence expenditure? It is not their business. It is our business.

*** *** ***

*Well, I thank the Prime Minister for whatever clarification he has given. The point which I would like to know is whether there is any scope for our bargaining with the IMF on its anticipated conditionalities. If so, what is our bargaining power, I would like to know. What is the strength we have got in our hand?

*** *** ***

* In response to Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao's clarification—"I had categorically stated that there has neither been any pressure from them nor is there any possibility of our yielding to pressure."

If I am not divulging anything that the Prime Minister told me in confidence a few days ago—I do not think it was in such a confidential manner—he told me that he had been told—he was frank and modest enough to say that he is not an economist, he is not a finance man but those of his people who have long experience of dealing with the World Bank and IMF and all these institutions have told him—that nowadays in the IMF there is a new thinking going on and that new thinking is that they try to impose very harsh conditionalities on several countries of the Third World—of Africa. Latin America and Asia—and because of the harshness of those conditionalities, the economies of those countries simply collapsed and there was chaos. Therefore, he told me—it is not what he is saying, it is what is being told to him—that IMF people are now thinking that it is better not to push these things too far because then the result may be opposite of what they want. I said that is a good thing but then let us hear from the Finance Minister what he has to say on this. I am sorry to say that the way the Finance Minister put his whole case, if I have not misunderstood him is that we have really no go. We have no alternative. We will have to accept whatever the IMF wants, otherwise we will not get the loan, without which it is impossible for us to carry on. This is the sum and substance of the whole thing.

I do not want to take much time but I will tell my basic objection. The question of giving support or confidence to this Government at this stage just does not arise at all. Whatever little they have done in the last few days, does not inspire confidence and what they are proposing to do, according to whatever information we are able to gather, is something which is fraught with grave consequences. And in whose interest it is being done? I want to know whether the vast majority of common people in this country are going to be benefited or are all the burdens going to be heaped on them. Nobody denies now that this deflation is going to boost up inflation much further than it has gone now. And the burden of that inflation will be borne by whom? Any body who knows economics knows that in a period of inflation, it is not big companies or the big owners or the big businessmen who suffer. They get higher profits in a period of deflation. It is the poor people who suffer. And if they insist, as the Finance Minister told us, on drastic cuts in the subsidy, then what about the subsidy on food? If the subsidy on food is drastically cut, whom will it hurt? Will it hurt you and me? I do not think you and I bother much about the ration shops. We do not want to go and stand there in a line for hours together to get some 600 or 100 grams of sugar. Do we? It is the poor people. The whole public distribution system is meant as a cushion, as a safeguard for the weaker, the vulnerable sections of the society, not to put them at the mercy of the open market. But if under pressure of IMF these subsidies are removed or practically removed, who will suffer? So, we have to know something about these things. We cannot just shut our

eyes and say, yes, we support the Government. We cannot support the Government like this on these issues at all. I do not say that this Nehru Gandhi framework of ideas, concept of ideas, was always very scrupulously followed in the past. It is not so. At least for the last ten years. I should say that a lot of erosion was going on. But at least some lip service was paid to this framework, to this ideology, that we are not going to depart from; we are sticking to it. But now what is happening is that in a kind of hush-hush way, in a backdoor way, this whole framework and ideology is proposed to be given up. You are free to do it, if you can convince the country and the people that without it we cannot survive, and that the whole old thing should be thrown in the waste paper basket. But please tell us what is your rationale. You have got enough economists and experts at your disposal. They should explain.

Finally, I would say, that there is no question of our voting for your Motion on expressing confidence in this Government. There is no question about that. We are worried because we do not want to precipitate another mid-term elections. That is also there. The people are in no mood. You know it very well. Everybody, whichever party he belongs to, from whichever part of the country he comes from, knows it. Tomorrow if we go to the people again and say: "Give us votes", they will give you shoe-beating. We are not going to do anything which will precipitate another mid-term elections. The leader of the BJP has stated here very emphatically on Friday that they were going to oppose this Motion. What he means by it, I do not know. We will see at the end, whether they are going to vote against this Motion or what. If they vote against it and if we also join with them, this Government will be out of office tonight. It cannot survive. Then there will be no option left but to go for elections again. That is the unfortunate part of it. Nobody can form the Government just now. You have not formed the Government. You are a minority government. Nobody is in a position to form a majority Government. And nobody is in a position to go and tell the people that "You must vote again, because we are not capable of running the show". None of us is in a position to do that. These conditions of instability—I want to make it clear—are not a party issue. The conditions of instability, prolonged instability, are the worst possible thing for the country and for the common people. All the burning issues are hanging fire. We are not able to attend seriously to any of them. And as far as ordinary people are concerned, the absence of stability only makes them the worst victims of all kinds of exploitation, all kinds of arbitrary decisions which are imposed on them, may be by the big bureaucrats or may be by the monopolists who control the market and all that. And if that goes on, it breeds further cynicism and loss of credibility among the common people and then all kinds of devices and all kinds of other disruptive forces flourish on that.

*** *** ***

A remedy for stability has been advocated yesterday or day before yesterday in a Press conference by my friend Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. I really do not understand what he has said and what his colleague says. He has said that in the face of this crisis, it is necessary that the country should be united and come together and, therefore, all like-minded parties should form a coalition government; but in such an event the BJP will stay out.

Nothing would be easier. Sir, than for us to press the 'No' button and vote against you. Nothing would be easier than that. But we do not know what our friends of the BJP are going to do, but subject to that also I would say because now I think the equations between you are changing to some extent—I don't say 'good' but they are changing to some extent and I don't grudge anybody that. But what is the price one has to pay, one has to see. You should not try in my opinion, to cut off all your ideological moorings. Ideology is supposed to be something which is peculiar to Leftists—the socialists and communists. If you mention the word 'ideology' they say, 'Oh! you must be a communist.' So, nobody else is supposed to have any ideology. I don't follow it at all. If, in order to survive. Mr. Prime Minister, because of your being in minority, you think that you should be able to, well, take advantage, let us say, of the differences between the Opposition, then that is a path which is also fraught with grave dangers and serious consequences may ensure from that because today as we have decided, we are not going to vote for your motion and we are not going to vote against your motion. We are going to abstain for now. I cannot give a guarantee for what is going to happen next time because such occasions will go on occurring. That is the whole problem. So, it is primarily the job of the Government to try to save itself. It is not the job of the Opposition to save it, it is the job of the Government to try to save itself. Since you have got into this position, you must try to save yourself. And I suggest once again that if you are serious about it, then your style of functioning has to change basically and you must not go on doing these things, taking the country by surprise and by dismay with all kinds of far-reaching measures which will have a fall-out, which cannot be imagined at the moment, and then saying. 'No, no, we have been consulting the Opposition.' What kind of consultation is that? I don't say consultation will satisfy everything, but at least we can judge the sincerity of the Government in trying to take the people into confidence. And if that is not done, well, next time I think you will have to think afresh. Each time you will think afresh and I think that will also create a situation of tension for you because you never know what the Opposition is going to do, you never know what the BJP will do, you never know what we are going to do. So, you will spend many sleepless nights. I do not want you to spend sleepless nights, Mr. Prime Minister, your health is not very good. But what about the health of the Government?

*** *** ***

So, please take the reality into proper appreciation and accordingly I hope you will act. In the days to come I am afraid many of these so-called reform measures which will unfold, will meet with very harsh criticism and opposition by us because we cannot forget what is going to be the lot of the people outside, who have sent us here. That is the question. If they are going to be thrown to the wolves of unemployment and inflation and high prices and closures—I am told one of the proposals is that the statutory legal provision which now exists that no employer can close down his factory permanently without getting the permission of the Government concerned is going to be removed, he will be free at any time to close down his unit and to sell off the land, buildings and the equipment of his factory because that is something they are pressing for saying. 'Why should we run an uneconomic unit? Why should we run a loss-making unit? Give us the freedom to close it down and throw the workers out on the streets.'

But there is a legal provision which prevents that being done at the moment. Are you thinking of removing that? We do not know, but the papers are saying that you are planning to do that. So, you can better tell them not to write these things, which are damaging your credibility. We regret very much that we are not able to support your Motion; we are not opposing also because of the consideration which I said earlier. Nobody would be able to face the people and another election. So, we will abstain from voting, but our abstention should not be taken as support to you. I know some BJP friends may like to say that they are the real Opposition and others are not the Opposition because of the abstention. We are not going to vote against the Motion. Let us see how they are going to vote and how many times they are going to do that. That is all I have to say. With this I close my speech now and I hope that the Government would seek to mend its ways and function in a democratic manner.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this morning when Shri Arjun Singh spoke, he referred to the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi and tried to explain to the House the real motivation behind that murder. But I would like to ask a question, who inspired or what inspired Nathuram Godse to commit that foul deed. I think he was inspired by the systematic campaign of poisonous ideas which were being spread for a long time by the then Sarva Sanchalak of the RSS. I do not mention his name. The author of a book called 'A Bunch of Thoughts', which you can read in the Library and see how every page and every line of it reeks of communal poison.

Who inspired these Kar Sevaks? I do not know whether it is right to call them as Kar Sevaks. These vandals, who are masquerading as Kar Sevaks, who inspired them? Who inspired them to demolish that structure on the 6th of December?

According to my friend Shri Vajpayee,** they should be called here; they should be arraigned; they should be hauled up but nobody knows who they were. That is what we were led to believe that they are anonymous people. I am sure, the Prime Minister knows it! But anyway, I suggest, Sir, that propaganda which has been ceaselessly carried out in this country, injecting poison into the Hindu mind, by the Leaders not only of the RSS, VHP and so on but of the BJP also—not all of them perhaps were responsible for these group of people taking courage in their hands and doing what they did on the 6th of December. What was destroyed, Sir? Our Muslim friends say that it was a mosque which was destroyed. Because, according to them, and according to the teachings of Islam, a mosque, whatever changes it may undergo over the years, a mosque, once a mosque is always a mosque. So, they think, a mosque was destroyed. The other side had gone on claiming that it was no longer a mosque; that it had in practice been converted into a temple. The idols were there; the *poojaries* were there; pooja was being observed everyday; and no *namaz* had been performed in that place for many years. No Muslim was allowed to enter that place. So, according to them, it was a temple. Whether it was a mosque or whether it was a temple, this or that, it was a place of worship. It is that, which has been destroyed. I wish

* Participating in the debate on the Motion of No-confidence in the Council of Ministers headed by Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao; *L.S. Deb.*, 17 December 1992.
**Referring to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, MP

to say and I want all our Hindu friends, who are proud rightly of being Hindus to consider this fact that what was destroyed really are some basic tenets and principles of the Hindu religion itself. The very tolerance, the very compassion, the principle of pluralism, the symbol of that is the Hindu religion. But these people, these intolerant people—What shall I call them, I do not know who performed this act, have not even been condemned by the BJP Leaders, not even by Shri Vajpayee. He only says that he did not welcome it. He said, it is very unfortunate. He is very sorry that such a tragic thing took place. But he does not condemn it. I think that, in order to establish their *bona fides* in this House, the BJP must condemn what happened on the 6th of December. They may blame anybody, I don't ask them to take the blame on themselves, they can blame anybody they like, but even without blaming anybody, that act of vandalism and destruction should be condemned. After all, the whole world is watching us. The Parliament of India is in Session. The whole world is watching to see whether the Parliament speaks out against this act of destruction and vandalism.

We had adopted some Resolution yesterday, it is being challenged here, was it adopted or not adopted? Some people on this motion raised a big *hulla-gulla* and said that it was not passed. But if they are interested or sincere in condemning what happened, why are they challenging that resolution? They should not challenge it. That is a technicality, whether it was formally put to the note and passed or not passed. Do you agree with the contents of that Resolution or not? I am challenging you to say whether you agree or not with the contents of that resolution. That is a point.

A similar resolution was adopted in the other House. Your party was present there in the other House also.

It was passed. Behind all this, I am constrained to say that we should not undertake what is happening. There is a long strategy. That strategy is aimed at destroying one by one all the established institutions which are enshrined in our Constitution and then coming to power in a Hindu theocratic State, which they like to call *Hindu Rashtra*.

The deliberative deception which was practiced on the Supreme Court, the highest Court in the land, was it accidental? It was not accidental.

Then there is a violation of the Constitution, the basic principles of secularism, which means they are pouring a lot of ridicules and scorns on the word 'secularism'. Let us take it as its lowest common meaning: that is equal status and rights for all religions. They do not agree with that. They have challenged that.

Then I must express my thanks to my BJP friends—for whatever reason; I do not wish to go into that—they decided today to allow the Parliament to

resume its normal functioning and they gave up the pre-condition on which they have been harping for the last three days.

*** *** ***

Then there is an Act in this country called the Representation of the People Act by which we are all governed; we all fight elections under that Act. If you study that Act, certain provisions of that Act I am afraid, I have not got number with me just now, of the relevant provisions—it is expressly forbidden to ask for votes from the people on the basis of any religion or religious symbols. But your Leader was telling us repeatedly here over the last one year that the reason why we were able to come to power in Uttar Pradesh where our party was virtually nothing before the last election, was this Temple. So it means the appeal is to the Temple, which is an appeal to the religious symbol, which is a direct violation of the Representation of the People Act. Unfortunately, nobody has hauled you up in the courts. The Bombay High Court has disqualified three Shiv Sena MLAs and one Shiv Sena MP.

They have disqualified them on the ground of their having been proved that in their election campaign they have made religious appeals. The High Court of Bombay has disqualified them. But you people are going merrily ahead.

*** *** ***

The outrage, which was committed on the 6th of December, now we have analysed whether the BJP leaders were really taken unaware or by surprise as is being made out. That is what is being made out now. 'We know nothing about it. We did not expect such a thing to happen. We could not control the crowd.' In that case their inefficiency, their importance as leaders have also been proved. They have no business, if they are such an important people, to collect such a huge crowd there and then say, we could not control it. If you cannot control it, why did you bring them there? Why was statement made saying 'Oh, we are not going to do *kar seva*, but restrict *kar seva* to *kirtans* and *bhajans*.' Their statements are on record. If I mention that, they will say that what is the proof, this and that. One very important leader, not here now, said, we are not going to confine our *kar seva* to *kirtans* and *bhajans* our people are going to do *kar seva* with hammers and pic-axes.'

*** *** ***

Then, Sir, all these people were collected at a time when the court had already said that no construction activity of any kind is to be allowed there: Nothing is to be allowed there.

Instead of asking people to go home, two top leaders went out in different directions in order to collect more people and bring them back. People were instigated, incited by saying that the court's order need not be bothered about. This court, as Shri Somnath Chatterjee said, is being utilised as an instrument of the Executive. The Executive is utilising the court to suppress the desire of the masses. Therefore, do not worry about it, ignore it. Is this not instigation at its crudest form?

I do not believe all the cock and bull stories, that nobody knew anything, they were innocent angels. Suddenly they found that some people were disobeying their instructions and rushing ahead.

We had asked the Prime Minister in one meeting, I forgot in which date we met him at his house, that suppose a section of these people, some group of people, tries to force its way forward into that area where the Babri Masjid structure is located, what will happen?

The Prime Minister said that they will be stopped. They have to be stopped. Of course, they also failed to stop them and these people, whether by design or by failure to show their leadership, also said that.

So, Sir, I owe an apology to the House and also to the BJP friends because the last time we decided this question, the Home Minister had made a statement here. I had rightly talked about riding a donkey and a tiger and that has been proved now. That they bought a tiger. They put in a cage. They fed it, fattened it up, then let it loose, got on 'to top of it, thinking that it is only a dhobi's donkey. Ultimately, we saw what happened. But the mistake I made was, I freely admit it, I spoke here saying that these tactics of developing tensions, building up crisis, going up to the brink of the crisis and then again retreating, they have done it once before in the month of June and July', and probably they will do it again.

I made a mistake. I gave them the benefit of doubt, which they do not deserve. It was foolish of me to do that. This time they were determined to go ahead.

Now, Sir, it has been said that it was spontaneous upsurge of the people, therefore, it could not be controlled. Because it was spontaneous upsurge of the people, therefore, it should not also be condemned. These statements have also come out.

So, now I do not know what to say. Many friends say that the law of the jungle was prevailing. I think, to call this the law of the jungle is to slander animals which live in the jungle. Wild animals do not behave like this. Wild animals never attack anybody or a human being, unless they are first attacked.

This is not the law of the jungle. What was going on then, that is something ten times worse.

Anyway, I do not want to take much time. I can only say that we cannot support this Motion because this Motion means that they want this Government to go and to be replaced by their Government. We cannot support such a move. At least it will be done on our dead bodies. But at the same time, I wish to make it categorically clear that as far as our party is concerned, we think that the Government, the Central Government, and the ruling party have completely forfeited the confidence of the people of this country by the way they have handled this affair, for bungling, by their failing to carry out the assurance which they had repeatedly given, and in fact, then if you go into the past you have to go into the whole thing which was described here about what happened in 1949, 1986 and subsequently.

I myself went to the late lamented Rajiv Gandhi. My party asked me to go and try to convince him that on that occasion they should not fall along the BJP to pull down V.P. Singh's Government because the issue, there was the question of defending the mosque. I told him, "You can take any other opportunity, any other time you like and vote against V.P. Singh's Government, but do not show the country that you are siding with the BJP, on that day, to pull him down". Shri Rajiv Gandhi asked me, "Do you expect me to support that fellow"? I said, "I am not asking you to support him. I am only asking you to not to pull him down on this occasion." Anyway, he did not listen and we had this dubious spectacle of BJP and Congress together pulling down V.P. Singh Government for the crime of having stood fast on his pledge that so long as the Constitution is there, I am not going to allow any damage to be done to this Mosque.

Now it has happened. It does not matter if Governments come and go. What has happened now? The Prime Minister, so many times, in so many places, on so many occasions, assured that his Government would protect that structure. Of course, now explanations are coming as to why they failed. You allowed—how many? One hundred companies or more of the Central para-military forces to be handed over to the control of the U.P. State Government, which you have now dismissed, which had resigned and then was dismissed by you. That means you had tremendous belief and faith in Shri Kalyan Singh. I do not blame you. He came and assured you so many times. But, Sir, you should really get an award for gullibility. I must say. You are willing to trust these people more than to trust the other forces in this country. And this Shri Kalyan Singh saw to it that no protection was given there at all.

I also want to ask a question. If the Government had been dismissed and already the Centre had taken over, for 36 hours after that, those fellows were

still there, on the site, constructing that make shift temple or whatever it is. Already the Government of Uttar Pradesh had been dismissed and the Centre had taken over. The forces were under the command of the Centre, not of Shri Kalyan Singh. Why were those people allowed to continue there for 36 hours?

Somebody said it was in order to avoid a blood-bath, to avoid a bloodshed! So, you have to weigh these two things. Of course, there may have been bloodshed. But what about the bloodshed which ensued? What about the thousands of people all over the country, not only there, who have been killed, who have been murdered, whose houses were burnt and looted? What about the women who were raped? What about that? That was an inevitable fall-out of what these people were doing. If you have forces of law and order and security forces, sometime you must use them also in order to prevent much bigger blood-bath which would inevitably happen. But, I am afraid, this Government failed altogether.

Now, finally, I will only say about what happened after 6th December. It is all right to say that those three Governments have lost their moral right to govern, because they were being manned by the Chief Ministers and other people who were openly declaring that they belonged to the R.S.S. The R.S.S. had already been banned. So it can be argued that you cannot allow a State Government to be run by people belonging to organisations which have been declared illegal. But I would say that it is better not to hurry too much. Why? Because moral rights are not the same as constitutional rights. If these Governments failed to carry out the directives of the Centre, if they openly flouted the directives of the Centre, surely they must be dismissed. I do not know if you have reached that position and if you have got facts in your possession to make out a convincing case—not to us here but to the crores of people outside. They must be convinced that these Governments have not been dismissed simply because they were B.J.P. Governments; but because they were doing something which was a clear violation of the Centres directives and of the Constitution. I would have been happier if you had waited a bit and I am sure they would have given you plenty of opportunities in a day or two to take action against them. However, it was a sort of pre-emption. But now it has been done. It is no use weeping tears over it.

Now the single task is to fight this monster of communalism and fundamentalism which has emerged—not emerged but has now reared its head and is threatening the entire country and its unity, integrity and secularism. Can this be done by administrative measures alone? Can this be done by security forces and bullets, ordinances or by invoking article 356 of the Constitution or by putting people in jail? Those may be necessary in certain situation. But they cannot be fought and vanquished by administrative

measures alone. This is a political issue. This is an ideological issue. It has to be fought out politically and ideologically by all the forces in this country who are genuinely committed to the cause of secularism and they must, as far as possible, stand together. I do not know whether everybody is prepared to stand together or not. we will know in another few days' time perhaps.

The Congress party is the oldest among the parties which are here. It is the largest party. It is the party which had the privilege of leading the national independence movement.

*** *** ***

The Congress party is a party which has its own platform, its organisation, its working committee and everything. Why are they not saying something? Why are they keeping quiet? Why its working committee does not appeal to all congressmen in the country at every level, whenever they are to come out and join hands with all secular forces to fight against this monster? They have not said anything upto now. If other secular forces feel diffident—and some voices are heard saying: "Oh, they are not serious about it", it is for you to prove that you are serious. You have got a flag. Why can you not take that flag and bring your people out on the streets? Then it would be a much easier task to unify the ranks of the secular forces against communalism. I may tell you that all the people of minority communities, not only muslims, will be with you.

I was in Calcutta two or three days ago. I met some Christian friends also as a representative of the people. There are nineteen members in this House who belong to Christian community. They may not speak here. I do not know why. May be for various reasons. But they are thoroughly perturbed and disturbed and asking as to what is their future. They ask: "How will we survive in this country, if this kind of thing goes on?"

So, Mr. Prime Minister, you have got a big responsibility on you. You must give a ringing call to your own people first of all and then to the whole country to stand up and fight politically and not rely only on administrative measures. That unity alone, going to the people, going to the masses, will be able to defeat these things. Thank you.

Sir, this Bihar episode relating to article 356 has, in my opinion, thrown open once again the whole debate or discussion on this article—why exactly it was framed for, how it should be interpreted, what should be the parameters within which this article is to be exercised or implemented, and so on.

Sir, naturally, different parties, different State Governments have got different views.

There is an article—article 263—in the Constitution which has created or provides for the creation of a constitutional institution known as the Inter-State Council. This Inter-State Council has been devised by the framers of the Constitution as a constitutional device by which differences or differing opinions about the relationship between the Centre and the States can be discussed and perhaps can lead to some agreed conclusions or at least to some common perception and guidelines.

Sir, there was a time, long ago, of course, when practically one can say that there was one party ruling, both at the Centre and in the States. That was many many years ago. At that time this article 263 was never made use of. It was never resorted to because, although the State and the Central Governments were different, the party which was ruling was the same. But now we are in a totally different era. We have got different parties ruling in different States and we have got, at the Centre, a stage into which we have entered, it seems, of coalitions of several parties coming together and constituting a Government at the Centre. Therefore, in my opinion, the use of article 263 has become very very important and urgent now to discuss Inter-State issues and Inter-State disputes.

The Congress Government, while it was exercising power at the Centre, for close to fifty years, never utilised this article. So far as I am aware, this Inter-State Council was allowed to remain dormant. It was never called into action. Its meetings were never convened and no attempt was made to see that it grappled with serious problems which affect the Centre and the States. The party may have been the same but the States are not the same and they have their differences, they have their disputes.

---

* Speaking on the Statutory Resolution regarding approval of Proclamation of the President in relation to the State of Bihar; *L.S. Deb.*, 26 February, 1999.

So, I am only reminding you and reminding the House that it was only after a long long time and after the United Front Government came to power that this institution of Inter-State Council was revived, was called into action. It held three-four meetings on important questions which affect the Centre and the States.

One, for example, was the question of how the Central finances should be distributed between the different States, how the Central finances should be devolved to the State Governments. This was a matter in which the Inter-State Council sat there with all the members present. The members of the Inter-State Council happened to be the Chief Ministers, so that all the different political ideologies and views were represented adequately through the Chief Ministers. They did reach a consensus regarding the devolution of Central finances to the States. Three or four meetings were held and there was, I should say, quite a healthy exchange of views.

These meetings were convened by the Ministry of Home Affairs, at a time, when I happened to be incharge. Then we also discussed at great length this question of article 356, which is a controversial matter, of course.

An attempt was being made and the Chief Ministers there all expressed a desire that we should try to reach some sort of a consensus on how this article should be used, when it would be used, when it should not be used and so on. I may say—I am cutting short, Sir, of course—that ultimately a broad consensus was reached and that consensus was that this article 356 should be retained in the Constitution but with some adequate safeguards put in, which would prevent the misuse of this article by the party which happens to be in power at the Centre. Only one State Government, as far as I recall, one State Chief Minister, that is of Punjab representing the Akali Party held a different view and their view was that this article 356 should be deleted from the Constitution; it should not be kept at all. They said that Punjab had been the victim of this article; several times they have had a very bitter experience and they want this article to go. Of course, latterly, recently, if Press reports are correct, I find that there has been a slight shift again in their stand. Well, that is up to them to explain.

But the other Chief Ministers, whether they belong to Congress or BJP or Shiv Sena or Left or TDP they were all there, they were unanimously of the view that this article is not to be deleted; it is necessary to retain it but at the same time they were all of the view that in view of the past experience and history of this article, which has been misused so many times for political purposes, some safeguards will have to be introduced into this article to see if it is possible to prevent, at least to minimise the possibilities of its being misused to suit the interests of the Party in power. We were engaged in this discussion.

I think, it was quite an interesting and quite a fruitful discussion from which something might have emerged. Many suggestions and many proposals were being made by different Chief Ministers. But fortunately or unfortunately—it depends on what view one takes—our United Front Government was pulled down before we could complete this exercise. Therefore, now we are back again on this controversial question which has arisen, in this case on the concrete instance of Bihar.

I would remind the House, Sir, if you look at the Constitution, article 356 is an article, a provision which occurs in the Chapter on Emergency provisions. The heading is 'Emergency provisions', and within that Chapter there is this article 356. This by itself indicates that this is meant to operate in a very, very unusual and very critical kind of situations; it is not a normal thing which can be used lightly or at any time; and failure of the constitutional machinery in any State, putting it briefly, is the main cause, the main argument which is put forward; the failure of any State to comply with the constitutional requirements or provisions and then the question has to be decided whether it is a fit case for intervention under this article or not. I am saying this because so many arguments have been put forward; most of them, I should say are relating to the question of law and order. The Constitution does not say anything about this.

Law and order can be defined in many ways, the incidence of crime, the growth in the rate of crime, the character of these crimes which are being committed, and which are being committed with impunity, I should say, not only in Bihar but in so many States. If it was only in Bihar, then the situation in our country as a whole would perhaps not be so serious. I do not want to go into all these because some friends may start protesting but then some statistics, Government statistics relating to different types of crime year by year in different States were also read out by the Leader of the Opposition. That shows a horrifying picture. But that picture is not confined to Bihar by any means. This is not what is meant by the failure of constitutional machinery. Law and order, whether we like it or not, according to the Constitution, is the function of the State Government, to uphold or not to uphold. There can be other remedies for that. There have to be. Nobody can just sit back and watch the law and order situation deteriorating in so many States. I do not want to name all those States because again there will be some protests and uproar here which I do not want to create. For example, I do not think my friends here, sitting next to me, will object if I simply say that in the city of Mumbai an organised gang warfare is going on. Everybody knows it. It may be that *dalits* are not killed every day, but they have also been killed and shot down. There are organised gangs, armed gangs which are fighting each other, which are busy killing those people whom they do not like. These gangs remind, when you read the accounts, something like that used to happen in the

United States of America in the city of Chicago at one time, which was very notorious for these gang wars. These organised gangs are operating in Mumbai for a long time now, killing each other and also killing certain businessmen, industrialists and such type of people, leaders of big smuggling gangs and all that. I do not know what one should say about this. Should one say that because of this, there should be intervention through President's Rule? We have never said that. I do not say it even now. So, what I am saying is that there is a list of crimes like murder, rape, kidnapping or extortion. Extortion of money is certainly a criminal offence and that is very widespread in the country. There is a forcible extortion of money on the threat of your life. This is not really relevant in this context of article 356. I do not wish to name certain other states. For example, in the North East there are some States, I do not want to name them. As the Minister of Home Affairs, I had the occasion to visit many of these places and interact with the people, with the State Governments, with different parties and all that. There are a number of States in the North East where so many people are being killed. The armed groups are operating there. You can call them militant groups or whatever you like. Sometimes, transport is held up on the National Highways for weeks together, months together and forcible extortion is going on. Everybody knows it. There were reports that some Ministers, in one or two cases, the Chief Minister of some particular State was supposed to be having secret collusions with some of these militant groups, helping them, giving them money and shelter and so on. It is a serious matter. But we did not, at any time, suggest that the Government should be dismissed and we should have President's Rule.

So, what I am saying in the beginning is that all these instances of crimes and also rampant corruption—of course, there is no need to go into corruption—cannot be solved or put down by resorting to President's rule.

What is the guarantee the President's rule, if it is brought in will improve matters in these respects? Is there any guarantee? Those who are advocating the President's rule so strenuously should also give the House some confidence, some feeling, that they are in a position or in a condition where they could tackle these problems successfully.

When I was the Minister of Home Affairs for a short while I paid three or four visits to Bihar, and not only to these places where people have been butchered. It is a horrible thing. I will not forget it for the rest of my life. But in some of the villages we saw the bodies of the people, 15, 20 or 30, 60 in one case, in one village, including a number of women and small children who had been butchered.

But I would say that it is the primary duty in which my government failed. I admit it. That the State Government, the affected State should be

helped by the Centre above all, not by introducing the President's rule but by helping that State Government to suppress those criminals and to strengthen the law and order machinery in that State.

We thought of many things, we tried to do some things. We issued some instructions, directions, set up task forces, did this and did that, but nothing much came out of it. Above all, the State Police, there can never be any kind of reasonable law and order in a State, if the State Police, the Police of that State is not rendered capable of dealing with these matters. One cannot deal by sending the Army there or sending only the Central police force which sometimes have to go of course when the State asks for help. But normally if the Police of that State is so much weakened or so much—what shall I say—inefficient or demoralised that they are not able to cope with the situation at all, then one cannot do anything. One has to help the State Police with training, with funds, with equipment, with communication equipment, with transport and above all with effective officers to lead them and of course in the case of Bihar the whole question of land reforms to which so many friends have referred to, quite rightly, which is so urgent, it is actually a class war—what is going on is a class war—between the haves and the have-nots. Those who were landless have been landless for years and those who have managed to grab the lion's share of the land, of course, do not want to part with it. This struggle is going on there.

If I may just give one small instance about the kind of things that were happening, in one of those places where large scale killings had taken place, I found shortly before the killers had arrived on the scene and started their action, there were some Police pickets which had been posted there. Because there was information that something might happen there, some police pickets were there round about that area within a very short distance. But when the firing went on, the killings went on, shoutings and screamings of the victims could be heard, nobody came, nobody interfered, nobody did anything.

I personally spoke to some of those policemen manning those pickets. I asked him, "Look, you were posted here, here is this village which is within eye sight and while all this was going on what were you doing? Why did you not try to go to their help?" I must tell you the reply that one policeman gave me. He said. "Our job is to pick up the bodies." It is all right but there is a police. Do not tell me that Shri Lalu Prasad or somebody in the Government had instructed them that your only job is "to pick up the dead body and nothing else".

But this is the state of utter demoralization to which the police there have come to. I was told by the senior officers of the State Government there, the IGP, the DGP and the Home Secretary—they always used to sit with us in

Conferences—that there were numerous examples of policemen who had been provided with ammunition, certain rounds of ammunitions, so many cartridges for their use. They were given cartridges. And, it was found later that a substantial part of this ammunition was being sold in the market by them. Instead of being used for any security purposes, these cartridges were being sold in the market. We gave a lot of directives and instructions to the senior officers but I am afraid that nothing much came out of it. We also asked them whether they could compile, block by block a list of all the land which is available in that block for distribution to the landless people. They said, "Yes, we can." Then, if you can do that, why can steps not be taken to distribute that land? So, decisions were taken that within one month or two months, all this would be done. Later on, we found that nothing was done. This region of terror which was being perpetrated by the Ranabir Sena on behalf of the landlords, on behalf of the vested interests, was continuing. It is mainly on account of the collapse of the police force. I submit that President's Rule will not solve this kind of state of affairs. The RJD Government was also ineffective. Maybe, it was incompetent. But you do not dismiss Governments only because of incompetence. Then, you have to go round dismissing so many Governments.

But my point is that from the very first day, as has been stated here earlier yesterday I think, the BJP Government, since it came to power at the Centre, was out to overthrow this State Government in Bihar. I think this is one aspect of the class war which is going on. These poor landless Dalits, Scheduled Caste people and others who are agricultural labourers by profession, most of them, are locked in this kind of battle. You can say, they also kill people. Well, whether they kill or somebody, on their behalf, kills is a different matter because there are some parties, some political groups operating in that area. I am sure the Prime Minister knows it. Who had taken up arms on behalf of these poor people? They also preach there that we should take revenge. If you are going to be killed, somebody is killed, you should kill 10 people on the other side. Then alone something will happen. This has been going on.

So, I say that when the BJP Government at the Centre decided to change the Governor in Bihar and to install in his place an RSS hard core man, why did it so decide? It should tell us that. This was done in defiance. I hope Mr. Home Minister is listening because he is supposed to know that there is a clear direction by the Sarkaria Commission that in choosing Governors for States, every care should be taken to see that first of all it should be somebody preferably from outside the State not involved in the State politics; secondly, it should be somebody who is not a very active political figure; and thirdly, of course, the Chief Minister of the State should be consulted. That does not mean that he must agree. He may or may not agree, but he should be

consulted. But the appointment of Shri Sunder Singh Bhandari, in my opinion, was a clear violation of this Sarkaria directive. Some people here were very surprised that why we were objecting to the fact that Shri Bhandari had said in an interview or somewhere that he was proud to be an RSS man. He can be proud, I do not mind. Let him be as proud as he likes. The point is, once he has become a Governor, he is occupying a high constitutional office. Shri Sarkaria had said that it should be a person who is not involved actively in politics. It is not his job to sit there and say that he is an RSS man and he is proud to be and he will continue to be.

Then, I would say that in between when Shri Bhandari was suddenly removed temporarily—he was temporarily removed and then later brought back again—the Press reported him as saying, when he was asked by some journalist,—if he feels that he has been quoted wrongly, he should say so—that "In my opinion, it would be preferable in such places to have a Governor who is apolitical"—apolitical means above politics. He said that an apolitical man should be the Governor. Well, the hint was quite obvious that he was considering Shri Bhandari to be a political person and that is why he was being shifted from Patna. Then, after a few days he was brought back again. I do not know how and why that happened; I would like to hear an explanation from the Home Minister. Was it due to the pressure of the RSS? Is it not a fact that the RSS is dictating who should be or should not be the Governor in a State like Bihar? I do not know, but this is what happened. Everybody knows that. Whether the Bihar Chief Minister was consulted or not before this appointment, I do not know; they can tell us.

What I am saying is that at the Centre whichever party or may be group of parties in a coalition happen to be in power, I can understand that there is always a political temptation. You have got this weapon of article 356 in your hands. If there is some State Government whom you do not like, who is giving you trouble, who is opposing you on many things, you have always got this weapon available to get rid of that Government. It is a temptation. If you can get the use of this Article approved, well the easiest thing is to go ahead and get rid of the State Government which may belong to a party, which may be run by a party which is opposed to you. I think the test of statesmanship is to see that you do not fall prey to this temptation so easily. I am reminded of the example of Uttar Pradesh during the regime of our United Front Government. When we came very near to the brink of using article 356 against Shri Kalyan Singh, do our BJP friends not remember that? Such a proposal was sent to the *Rashtrapati.* The *Rashtrapati* sent it back. Shri Kalyan Singh had managed just a few days earlier to get a substantial majority in the U.P. Assembly, which was also one of the factors that weighed in his favour. There were also protests from the BJP side.

But our Cabinet felt that since it had been returned by the President, the only option was to send it back to him again if we felt so strongly about it. Sir, there was some difference of opinion amongst us also. I do not think that Shri Advani will deny it now that he did later on, should I say, congratulated me for the stand I had taken. Some other members of the BJP here in the Parliament also came to me and said that I had taken a very bold and honest stand. But Sir, my friend Shri Mulayam Singh was very angry with me. He made no bones about it. He said "It is a great opportunity and you have lost it. It was the right opportunity to topple the Kalyan Government". Anyway, I do no not know whether I was right or wrong, but such situations arise.

*** *** ***

So, we did not apply article 356 in that case. Though the U.P. Government was a BJP Government and though many of us would not have shed any tears if that Government had been removed, but we withheld ourselves, we did not exercise that power. You can exercise it at any time you want if you do not have any degree of political wisdom and political neutrality and if you are interested in the politics of the parties involved or what is going to be the outcome as far as the Centre-State relations are concerned, but that is a dangerous thing.

So, Sir, in the present case, there have been, of course, all kinds of crimes committed in Bihar and I am not talking about the other side of this, the alleged defalcation of money and the Central funds being diverted. This is going on in some other States also. I can quote some North-Eastern States where people complain to us bitterly that so much money which is being sanctioned by the Centre for development work, for construction work in those States, is not being spent for that at all. That is going into the pockets of some other people. Some Ministers, some contractors and some bureaucrats are pocketing this money. This is going on. Maybe in Bihar also, such things happen. I am quite sure that they happen there.

Now, what is the way out? Is the way out is to impose President's Rule and take over the Government of that State? Another set of people will come there who will be equally interested in lining their pockets. That is all that will happen. I regret to say but that has become the condition of our society now. Whoever can make money by fair means or foul means cannot resist the temptation to make money. This is what is going on in the country. Let us be frank about it because we are now thinking in terms of changing of Governments. Maybe, this Government will go, some other Government will come. Maybe, one Prime Minister will go, another Prime Minister will come. But what about these problems which are not the problems of a party but which are the problems of the country as a whole? Who can come before the people with some policy, some programme on which they are prepared to

rule and act and see that these things are not allowed to go on? Nobody speaks about programmes. They speak about personalities. That is all right. They can compare Atalji with Soniaji and somebody else with somebody else, but I do not feel convinced by these things at all. What is going to be their economic programme? What are they going to do about it? Are they going to bring down prices.

The moment the new Government comes, will they be able to control prices and bring them down? Will they be able to control unemployment? Huge monsters of inflation and unemployment are stalking the country and nobody is prepared to put forward any concrete programme except talking in terms of money—"we will give so many crores for this and that"—but nothing happens on the ground. So, Sir, I will say that in the present case, this resort to article 356 in the case of Bihar is clearly politically motivated by the BJP at the Centre. All this talk that it has nothing to do with people's interests, it has nothing to do with the interests of the poor and all that which is being talked about, in my opinion, is all hypocrisy and deception. Therefore, we cannot support such a thing because it means fooling the people. We have to oppose it and we do not wish to have again a Government there, under this kind of a palpably political and partisan governance which itself is a contradiction. In terms of Sarkaria Commission, they have no business to be there but they are being used. Therefore, we oppose this Proclamation and we hope the Parliament will reject it.

I also hope that this is the last occasion when this House will be called upon to perform the functions of the State Legislature of Assam. I think this has been going on for too long; and most of the members, I think on both the sides, have referred to the fact—I don't mean any disrespect to the two members who are here, but the fact remains—that Assam is by and large unrepresented in the Lok Sabha. And this is a distortion which should be corrected as soon as possible. It cannot go on indefinitely like this: and this House cannot go on indefinitely passing the Budget for the State of Assam and extending the periods of President's rule.

I would suggest that the Government should publicly state that it is prepared for the holding of elections. At the end of the next spell of President's rule, *viz.* sometime in March next year or before that—because after that, it will not be constitutionally possible to do so, unless somebody comes forward with the suggestion that the Constitution should be amended which, I think, nobody will support and at least we will not—elections have to be held, *i.e.* by 18 March 1983. The position should be made clear by the Government of India but not in a provocative way, as though the Government is challenging the people of Assam to come for a battle. It should be properly explained, and elections have got to be held; and preparation should be made for those elections. And the intervening period which is there—about seven months or so—is crucial. This seven-month period must be utilized for making every possible effort to reach some kind of a satisfactory settlement of this vexed issue of foreign nationals. As far as I know the mind of these student boys from Assam, if no settlement is reached between now and March, they are still in frame of mind to resist the elections. What form, it will take, I cannot say; whether they will give a general call for boycott of elections or whether they will again try as they did last time to prevent nominations being filed by the candidates, which they successfully did last time. I do not know what they intend to do, but their general feeling is that if no settlement is reached before March 1983, then they will consider that the elections are being forcibly imposed; and in such a case, they would again try to gear up for some sort of a confrontation. I consider that it is of the greatest importance that this intervening period of 6-7 months should be positively and constructively

* Participating in the debate on the Notification under the Essential Services Maintenance (Assam) Act, 1980; *L.S. Deb.*, 5 August, 1982.

utilized to try to come to some reasonable, fair settlement of this issue and that the responsibility rests on the Government.

Certainly, we are in favour of those talks being resumed. There is no question of the talks being broken off, the talks must be resumed. I hope by the time they are resumed, we will not have again a new Home Minister; one cannot say. We are addressing ourselves at the moment to Shri R. Venkataraman. But by the time the talks are resumed, there may be some other person holding that office. It is also a complicating factor, I can tell you in the whole situation, because some continuity is required—people who must get the feel, hang, of this whole sort of atmosphere which has been created. I know it is very difficult for anybody if he is new to face this task; and then again he is likely to be changed very quickly. Anyhow, that is the constant practice.

*** *** ***

I do not want to take the time of the House by referring to the shabby way with which the Government behaved when there was a chance of the popular government being restored or six parties, a front of six parties, which have manifestly got a majority; and I should have thought by the way that today it would have been good tactics on the part of the Government to allow them to form a Ministry and make them face the situation. Even that common sense tactics was not employed by the Government. Any Ministry which is formed in Assam has no alternative but to tackle this movement. They have to do something; they cannot avoid it. I should have thought that you would have the good sense to allow those Opposition parties, that front under Shri Sarat Sinha's leadership to form that Ministry and then told them, come on, let us see how do you deal with these agitators; do something.

*** *** ***

What are you doing now, except complicating it? The President's rule is not a thing which does anything but complicates. For sometimes it becomes the necessity. And this motion which has been brought here, I mean there is no alternative for us but to support it. We cannot say, no there must be no further President's rule there from today, because you cannot have elections just now, it is obvious. Therefore, whether we like it or not, as a necessity, there has to be another spell of President's Rule. But let it be the last and let us all determine to get together and try to see that the elections are held in a normal and peaceful atmosphere in March 1983.

I don't think that the situation is as pessimistic as sometimes appears. In the course of these talks which have been going on, I had a feeling—I do not know; I may be wrong—I had a feeling that at least a good part of the people

who are representing the agitation are slowly and slowly changing their mind to some extent and coming around to the idea, from their own angle, they are also coming around to the idea that it is not possible indefinitely to go on like this type of movement and there should be some kind of settlement.

*** *** ***

I say there is nothing to be pessimistic about it, provided we get to business and talk on specific issues and try to clinch them with the agitation leaders. We know, all those who have participated in the talks know, that a lot of time is wasted in just making allegations and accusations against each other, going round and round, trying to find out whether what we have said last time is being correctly reported or not, which is just a waste of time. It is better if certain specific issues which require to be clinched, are clinched. You may not be able to reach agreement on all of them, but that is a different matter. But specific issues should be framed, the discussion should be business like and limited to those issues and we should try to take them up and clinch them.

In our view, there are some apprehensions among the people of Assam, one cannot deny them. Rightly or wrongly, those apprehensions have been still in their minds over the years of this movement and large numbers of people in Assam do feel that there is some huge group of undetected foreigners in Assam, who are likely to overwhelm them or overpower them or something like that and, therefore, that is what has given this movement the whole drift, that is what should be the great mobilisation in the movement and nothing else. So, this issue cannot be avoided and I think, and my party also thinks, that some process of detection, the machinery for detection, is all important. I agree with some members who have spoken about it from there. That is another question to which we will have to come, the machinery by which this detection and implementation will be carried out because it must be a machinery which is really impartial and in which everybody can have confidence and faith. It is a difficult thing to do, but it has got to be devised. And everybody has told us, especially people belonging to the minorities in Assam, that if State authorities with the State, bureaucracy, State police and all that are allowed to dominate the implementation and detection machinery, then they will create havoc and all sorts of innocent people will be evicted by force. Evictions have been taking place for a long time. Many people have referred to it, but before we come to the machinery, the criterion for detection, the formula for detection, has not yet been agreed upon in those talks. That is why the talks broke down last time and we think we should stick to the formula, to the question that on the basis of our own Constitution, the Citizenship Act, the Foreigners' Act, the Passport Act, the international commitments that we have entered into and also on humanitarian

considerations which cannot be ignored, people who have been there, who have been living for 15-20 years, who have either been rehabilitated by the Government or who have managed to settle down themselves and whose children have been born and brought up in Assam, people who were either working on land or in business or in trade or in some job, well, you cannot physically uproot them. There are lakhs of such people, they cannot be physically uprooted and told that they have to get out from there. There is a humanitarian consideration to it also. So, all these things will have to be borne in mind when we arrive at a reasonable and fair formula for detection which has got to be done, in my opinion.

The Government, of course, has long ago retreated from the Prime Minister's original commitment that 1971 would be taken as a cut-off year, which we had all supported. Later on, the Government has retreated from that position and in the later meetings we have been discussing not 1971, but 1961 to 1971. That whole period has been taken into account. Now I agree, and everybody knows it that there was a big influx from East Pakistan in the years 1964 and 1965 during the Indo-Pak war. Just before the Indo-Pak war there was a big influx of people who were running away. There is no doubt about that and some figures are there with the Government. They may not be absolutely reliable. Those figures do show that the overwhelming majority of the people who came away as *bona fide* refugees, were trying to escape from persecution or the threat of persecution. Those people who are to be identified as *bona fide* refugees cannot possibly be asked to go again, to be driven out. Certainly they cannot be deported. We have some international commitment also to refugees. What is to be done with them later—those who have come into Assam, those who have come into Meghalaya, those who have come into Tripura? For long years they have been coming into West Bengal. This question never arose before. What do we do with them later on, how do we deal with them, how we disperse them, where we settle them, is a different question. But there should be no question of deporting them simply because they come from the origin of the country, which is Pakistan. It cannot be done with those people who came as *bona fide* refugees. This should be made clear. I am repeating. It seems to be an obvious thing to say. But I have to repeat because I regret to say that in this movement which is based on some genuine apprehensions also, I do not deny that this movement has got very strong overtone of Assamese chauvinism of even anti-Bengali feeling. Anti-Bengali feeling in Assam is nothing new in history. May be the Bengalis are themselves responsible for it. I do not know.

But the fact remains that this is nothing new over the years in Assam. There have repeatedly been movements against the Bengalis, but in this movement which is directed specifically or outwardly against foreign nationals, we have got to see to it that not a single Indian citizen from

whichever State he may have come and gone to Assam, whether he is a Bengali or Bihari or whoever he may be, not a single Indian citizen can be driven out under the plea or under the cover that because he is not an Assamese, therefore, he has no right to remain in Assam. Then there will be nothing left of this country. If this goes on once in Assam, it will start in so many other States also. If it spreads in other States, there will be nothing left of unity in this country at all. If this fundamental right is taken away of an Indian citizen to go and work or to seek employment and settle down in any other part of the country, if this is denied, in any case, it cannot be tolerated.

There remains those people who may be foreign infiltrators, people who have come illegally, not as refugees, who have not been regularised, who have not been registered as citizens. Well, you have to deal with that and see how many they are, where they are, how they are and also if any of them are willing to give a commitment that they have severed all their connections and links with East Pakistan or Bangladesh; it is no longer East Pakistan, I would say that that should be considered. Some opportunity should be given under our existing legislation to apply for citizenship if they want to. But that has to be considered.

The Governor of Assam has come here with some proposals which have been kept confidential. Of course, we do not know what he has recommended or suggested except the shuffling of some officers as I am able to make out. But the Press reports are that he has been recommending—why 1967 should be taken as a cut off year. I do not know if the Minister is going to enlighten the House at all.

The whole trouble is that in these meetings which are going on here, your meeting with representatives of different parties, the meeting which you have called tomorrow which, unfortunately, I would not be able to attend because I would not be here, I would say, Shri Venkataraman, you have to be very careful that an impression is not created in the minds of these agitation leaders, particularly the students, that before they are called to Delhi for the next round of talks, the Government of India and these political parties are together trying to hatch up some kind of new conditions or terms which we are going to confront them with. This is actually not what we are doing. This is not what we are doing at all. There should be no such apprehension. But the mode, methodology, the modality of our approach should also be such that people who are not interested in settlement, those people who do not want settlement, there are people there, there are forces there, there are also secessionist forces in the movement, there are people who want the talk to be broken down, they should not get handle. They should not be allowed to arouse suspicion in the minds of the people, what is the use of going to Delhi for talks because the Home Minister and five or six parties, they have got

together secretly and come to some decision without consulting us and they are going to face us with that. We should not give that kind of impression because that will not create an atmosphere. It will only queer the pitch.

Finally, I would just like to add these people, whenever they come here, sometimes we have talked to them separately. I told them so many times that throughout such a prolonged movement you never raise any question about the economic development of Assam. Is that not a part of the movement that is spread over at all? You voice to say a few words. I have told those talk about foreigners, drive out foreigners. It seems, you are not interested at all in the economic development of Assam which is a very burning issue and on which issue you should take them up. I told them, we are prepared to support you. But you did not say anything of that at all.

I find somebody has written an article in a paper. From the name of the author, it seems to be, probably also, an Assamese gentleman—giving a ridiculous theory: that all those people in Assam who are cultivating raw-jute—producers of raw-jute—are people who have come from Bangladesh and they are foreigners. So, foreigners in Assam are controlling the whole production of raw-jute and they are in league with the big *Marwaris*, jute mill-owners in Calcutta to whom they are selling raw-jute. So, they are also gaining, profiting and the mill-owners are also profiting.

*** *** ***

The whole thing is ridiculous. I would like to ask, if the cultivation of raw-jute in Assam is, let us say,—if it is—entirely in the hands of Assamese, genuine Assamese about whom there is no question, would they not sell the same jute to the mill-owners in Calcutta? Where would they sell? Unfortunately, there is hardly any jute mill in Assam to consume their own raw-jute. All that raw-jute goes to Calcutta—whether it is being grown by Assamese or by Bengalis or by Bangladeshis or whatever it is. And in any case, let me say those jute cultivators there are suffering just as much as jute cultivators in any other State. Their prices have been depressed by the very same mill-owners. They are not in league with them at all. They are being denied even the statutory prices or support prices which are announced by the Government every year. They are poor people. They are not wealthy people at all. Such things are being written in order to steer up some kind of chauvinistic feelings which I don't think at all desirable.

I do not know about the youngmen of Assam because there is lot of unemployment there. We should, I think, encourage them to get more and more opportunities of scientific education and higher technical education and that kind of thing. We have got so many institutes and so many centres of learning in our country. Of course, this would apply as well to the whole

North Eastern region and I would not confine only to Assam, but these people from the whole North Eastern region, including Assam. I think, these youngmen should be given special facilities and extended opportunities for higher technical education and scientific education in our institutes so that they do not feel that these benefits are all going to people who are far far away from them.

Other things have been mentioned—the question of oil and petro-chemicals and proper utilisation of gas, natural gas, which is there in plenty in Assam... Well, I was there only a month and a half ago and to Shiv Sagar, the area you have to go there still, which is one of the crude oil producing areas. In Shiv Sagar, you will see, throughout the countryside, there are so many, what is called, Christmas trees. You know that, that is where the oil has been found in a particular place. For the time being, the well has been plugged and sealed by a plug which looks like a Christmas tree. This is how, it is called the Christmas tree. That oil is not being taken out though there is oil there and stocking all over the place. The well has been plugged because they do not know what to do with the crude oil. They do not have the capacity to use that crude oil. I think, there is scope, here.

If you are serious about planning, and if your Budget is helping for the development of Assam, there is much more scope for the development of petro-chemical complexes and proper use of natural gas and all that which would certainly help them very much.

My friend, Shri Varma* has mentioned the question of completion of the broad gauge railway line within the scheduled time and extension of the broad gauge line from Jogighopa to Gauhati and from Gauhati to Tinsukia. I do not know why these are taking such a long time. They all add to the feeling of a sort of separation from India, an unbridgeable distance from India.

About the question of completion of construction of a bridge at Silghat over Brahmaputra, it is also running well behind scheduled time. There is also the question of new bridges over Brahmaputra at Jogighopa and Dibrugarh. Flood control is a perennial question which is being mentioned again and again. I do not want to repeat it. We should have some intensive schemes for flood control. Otherwise the same thing is repeated over and over again. Tremendous devastation is there partly because of the movement itself and partly because of the administrative difficulties.

There is no doubt that black-marketers and hoarders are taking the maximum advantage of the situation to raise the prices of essential

* Referring to Shri Ravindra Varma, MP

commodities. You know that the prices of rice, atta, pulses, sugar, cloth, kerosene, mustard oil and so on have shot up like anything. The ordinary people are suffering. Therefore, there should be a proper scheme for the distribution of all these essential commodities at properly controlled prices.

These are some of the things which on the Budget aspect of it I wanted to mention. I am totally opposed to Shri Laskar's resolution or motion or whatever it is. This is no way to solve the problem by clamping down the Essential Services Maintenance Act to several industries and services and so on. History is proving that these things do not fulfil the purpose for which they are supposed to be designed at all, specially when there is so much discontent or revolt in certain areas. You cannot quell it simply by this kind of administrative, punitive measures. It has not been possible and it is not possible anywhere in the country. We are seeing it every day. I do not want to mention all these things. So, I oppose the motion for extension of the Essential Services Act and its application to so many services and industries.

On the Budget, I have made some remarks. I hope, all the suggestions made by me here regarding the economic development side of it will be seriously taken into consideration. I support Shri R. Venkataraman's motion for extension of the President's rule upto March 1983 with the proviso that let this be the last time. Let there be elections definitely at the end of it. Let the Government fix its target and declare it openly, declare it publicly, in a proper and purposive way to the people. Let them go and campaign there. Why don't they go there in Assam and campaign there? Why don't the people belonging to your party go and explain to the people there? What happened during the movement? How many people belonging to C.P.M. and C.P.I. have been beaten up and killed? We resisted the movement because at the earlier stages, it was a violent and chauvinistic movement. Our offices had been burnt down and our workers had been attacked and assaulted. What were your people doing in Assam at that time? They were helping the movement. They went with the tide; they drifted with the tide. That is not the way any national party can stand up in such a moment of crisis. If you want to save the integration of the country, kindly take a proper look at the whole thing and move in a more proper and sober way. You will then get our cooperation and we will try to help you to solve the problem and the elections can be held in March 1983 in a way which will restore the normalcy.

Once again, I thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, those who are in the leadership of the Congress Party and of the National Conference also are emphasising what has already been said on this side of the House that every possible effort and initiative must be taken, in mutual cooperation, to revive the political process in the Valley. But they do not say what they propose to do about it. On their own claim, they are the only relevant political force in the Valley or in the world. At the moment, I don't think anybody is relevant. They are the two major forces. But the leaders are all sitting here. They do not tell us what they propose to do. Their followers are there. Their cadres are there facing tremendous risks, I should say, to their lives, safety and security of their families and all that. So, kindly tell us something apart from hinting that the Governor should be changed, which is the only suggestion that they are making—that too implicitly. Nobody is spelling it out saying that immediately the Government should recall the Governor. The Governor can be recalled—may be he will have to be recalled at some stage.

*** *** ***

The Government may have made many mistakes. The previous Government made even more mistakes. And after all, the purpose of this parliamentary debate is to advise the Government to help the Government with our suggestions and our proposals as to how to tackle such a tremendously difficult situation. The Government has already taken some steps which I believe will go a considerable way in replacing the purely administrative outlook. That is what is required today, above all, and that is a political outlook—whether they will succeed or not, I cannot say. I think the depth of the crisis is such that, as has been stated already by several speakers, it has gone beyond, far beyond the question simply of the individual personality of the Governor. The people of Kashimir have reached a stage. Why have they reached that stage of total alienation from India is something which we should all ponder about. We are all proud of that stage in our history when Sheikh Abdullah was at the helm of affairs in Kashmir when he was the undisputed, unchallenged and the tallest leader of the people of Kashmir and but for him, Kashmir would never have become a bastion of secularism and of integration with India. Why has the whole situation changed

* Participating in the discussion on the Motion under Rule 342 regarding the Kashmir situation; *L.S. Deb.*, 13 March 1990.

so much that we should ponder about? Why today the people of Kashmir, almost unanimously, it seems, I do not know—are demanding independence and freedom from India?

*** *** ***

I do not believe that everybody in Kashmir is a terrorist or a secessionist. Some are and some are cowed down by fear and would not be able to speak out. No doubt, but the main point is and I hope, the Prime Minister will also underline that the battle for secularism, the battle for Indian secularism, is being fought primarily today in Kashmir. We have to understand that. If you want to win that battle, we have to behave responsibly in our own country. If you want to help the secessionist, whether it is in Kashmir or in Punjab or all those groups of youth, I should say, in many North-Eastern States who have taken to the guns and are saying that they should also have separate States outside India, then the best way to do is to promote the idea of communalism and fundamentalism in our own country. That is the best provocation that can be offered. Therefore, we also have some responsibility in Kashmir. A member over there has very correctly underlined the fact that you cannot go on in our country allowing theories to be expounded about the nature of the state having to be made into a theocratic state owing allegiance to a particular religion or theories about minorities not having any identity of their own and not having rights of their own. If you go on allowing such theories to be propagated in our country you are doing nothing but giving ammunition to the secessionists in different parts of the country.

Therefore, you must also learn to behave with some sense of responsibility if you want to save the country.

Sir, much has been said about the Governor's role now. I do not defend it. We were opposed to his selection as Governor. For nothing else. I do not know him personally. We were opposed because we knew that he had a big confrontation with Shri Farooq Abdullah during his earlier stint as Governor. It was obvious that his selection could not be welcomed by Farooq Abdullah. Please tell us, whose instrument was he at the time when he was used to topple Farooq Abdullah's Government and to replace him by a Government of defectors? Whose instrument was he at that time? So, it is not surprising that Farooq Abdullah should have reacted so strongly to his selection this time.

Now that same man is again there as Governor and it is upto the Government to decide whether they will replace him by somebody else immediately or later on. It is a fact which has been confirmed that he took the action of dissolving the State Assembly without consulting the Centre.

He took his stand on article 53 of the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution which technically of course empowers him to do that without bothering about the Centre. But is that the way any responsible Governor should behave in a political crisis like the present one? Obviously not. It was an irresponsible and arbitrary act to dissolve that Assembly without consulting the Central Government here whose leading members, including the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, were all very much involved at that time in the Assembly election campaign. So he got away with it. Of course it has done a great deal of harm and damage; no doubt about it.

First of all, I want to say one thing about the repression. There is nobody in this House who cannot view except with extreme pain and sorrow the killing of people by firing—innocent people who became victims of such action. I also view with pain and sorrow the killing of innocent Army personnel. Just because they are Army personnel, they do not deserve to be killed. A group of Air Force personnel who were standing on the road side waiting for buses to come and pick them up were mercilessly shot down. We should condemn that also as we condemn the shooting of innocent civilians.

As far as I know, until this recent incident took place when an attack was made on a military convoy, thousands of people were being allowed to come in peaceful demonstrations from different parts of the State who ostensibly were coming to present memoranda to the United Nation's Observer's Office in Srinagar. Day after day they were coming. According to the Press reports some of these demonstrators ran into thousands. No attempt was made to disperse them by force, no firing, no lathicharge, no tear-gas, nothing took place.

Earlier than that the whole trouble had started just when Shri Jagmohan was appointed. I do not know whether he had actually taken the office or not when these mid-night searches took place in the city.

*** *** ***

That provoked the people and created a lot of resentment, indignation and trouble. But you cannot say that these demonstrations which were coming obviously to present anti-Indian memoranda to the United Nation's observers were in any way being sought to be suppressed or shot down. But these people also must realise. After all, if you make unprovoked attacks on the Army personnel, who will control those Army personnel? You know what happens. If the military is attacked, they spontaneously will react. A very unfortunate thing has happened. The children of Army personnel who were going in two school buses were sought to be attacked. So the military has retaliated in a way which is very severe and of course which is something beyond anybody's control.

Wherever excesses took place by security forces or serious allegations existed, whether it is there in Punjab or anywhere else, we have always been supporting the proposal that there should be proper impartial inquiry and investigation into those excesses. No doubt about it.

*** *** ***

...This is deplorable, whoever is killed, whether civilians or innocent military personnel or the Station Director of Doordarshan in Srinagar. What crime has he committed? He came back from work, when he was getting into his house with his key, he was mercilessly gunned down from behind.

*** *** ***

I would like to compliment both the Prime Minister and Advaniji for the courage of their respective convictions. I may not agree with both of them. But I certainly agree with the Prime Minister. But, at least both of them, on the floor of this House, had the courage of their convictions to speak out clearly their stands regarding article 370. They did not try any kind of hide and seek.

*** *** ***

... In spite of that difference, which is a very important difference, the whole future of Kashmir today is not dependent on a controversy or a debate about article 370. That is not the position. Well, you may try to inflate it into a very big issue, just now. Therefore, I think that it is a good thing—such courage of convictions should be there, whatever the ideas which may be opposite to each other—and I would like our friends on this side of the House to speak with the courage of their convictions.

In the newspapers, there is a Statement by one of the Secretaries of the Congress (I) party in which he is trying to say now and he claims that everything that was decided in this recent all-party meeting, which took place for two or three days in the Prime Minister's house—every initiative which has been decided on there every decision which has been taken about a separate Minister and Advisory Committee and all these things—has emerged from the brain of the Congress party. It is in today's paper. So, please make up your mind. On the one hand you go on attacking the Government and on the other hand, you want the credit for everything that is being done. That is not the honest way of dealing with the matters and certainly not.

*** *** ***

One more thing I would like to say, Sir, and that is on the question of curfew. What kind of curfew is this? I can understand what tremendous

suffering, the ordinary civilian population is going through. But I want to say one thing, if I am allowed. During these recent parleys, none other than my friend Shri Farooq Abdullah said, "If the curfew is lifted today, in Srinagar"—these are his words—"do you know what is the first thing that these people will do? They will go to Hazratbal, dig out the body of my father and hang it publicly in the square in Srinagar." This is what he said. He also said that things have come to such a pass that curfew cannot be lifted also. "The moment it is lifted, thousands of people will gather, go to Hazratbal, dig out the body of my father and hang it in the public square in Srinagar." It is a horrible thing for a son of an illustrious father to tell us. It makes your blood run cold. So, please understand as to where the situation has gone. This is not just a question of one Jagmohan sitting in Raj Bhawan there. Whatever he may have done wrongly, arbitrarily and in a way which will alienate people, of course, the Government has to deal with that, and we are taking steps. I hope the Government is taking steps to correct that and to see that a proper political initiative is taken. I just simply want to say that, as my friend Shri Saifuddin Choudhary said, this thing has not developed overnight in one day. It is the cumulative effect of so many things that have happened. Personally I am of the opinion that if you want to have a break through now, the first step necessary in that is that Farooq Abdullah and his National Conference Party—which, I believe, he still represents, potentially the major political force in the valley—should be delinked from this party. If they are not delinked from this party, you will never be able to regain the confidence of the people of the valley. Their alienation is from Delhi, from what they feel rightly or wrongly, over the years has been done by Delhi to the people of Kashmir. The treatment which they have received from Delhi is a symbol to them—a symbol of forces rightly or wrongly. It has become a symbol of forces which have neglected the whole valley—the development of the valley, the condition of their young people, who are unemployed, jobless, complaints of discrimination in employment against the local Kashmiris, the fact that nobody bothers to set up any development projects there etc., etc, and the way they treated Sheikh Abdullah and after him, Farooq Abdullah and all that. It has taken place over a number of years. I believe that the credibility of the National Conference has ultimately been destroyed because of his close association with Shri Rajiv Gandhi's party for the sake of winning some seats in the election, for the sake of getting some votes in the election.

*** *** ***

...The point is that from the day Shri Farooq Abdullah—for whatever reason and whatever calculation—decided to tie up the National Conference with the Congress (I), he has become a suspect in the eyes of the people of the valley as being a partner, even worse as becoming, on some occasions, an agent of that Delhi throne which has become the symbol over the years of neglecting the Kashmiris and denying their rights and all that.

Therefore, I think, a beginning can be made. But that beginning requires courage on the part of the National Conference leaders and cadres who are in a state of immobility today, paralysed to a large extent. I blame Farooq Abdullah partly for it also. You see, he has contributed to paralysing and immobilizing his party. They had lot of cadres in the villages—at least in the rural areas, we know. They may not be able to function in the city of Srinagar but they can still be mobilised gradually. They can be brought into political activity. But who is to do it? Only the leaders of the National Conference themselves can do it if they take the courage to break this association with the Congress Party which is not required, also any more, because they are finished. They are down and out. They were riding high at that time. But now it is required. If they want to save themselves and save Kashmir...

*** *** ***

I am afraid, Sir, those people who are dreaming of the collapse of socialism are going to have a rude awakening. They are going to be very much disappointed. Those people who think that socialism is finished and capitalism must triumph all over the world are going to be disappointed. ... A very valid point was made by my friend, Shri Jaswant Singh that there should not be glaring contrast between what goes on in our sovereign Parliament and what is going on in Pakistani Parliament. Benazir Bhutto has uttered quite an ominous threat which you must have seen where she has said that she agreed that these matters should be sorted out "bilaterally on the basis of the Simla Agreement. But that does not preclude our right from taking it up in the United Nations on the basis of the resolutions of the United Nations". She has made this statement. So, that game is going to go on. And after all, we should not be surprised if they are trying to get their back on us for what happened in Bangladesh in 1971. From that day, there are hawks in Pakistan who have always been saying, "These people broke the unity of Pakistan. They sent their armed forces there in order to help their revolt in Bangladesh. A big part of our country separated and became an independent State." Do you think that they have forgiven us for that forever? Their target, therefore, is Kashmir. They want to do the same thing in Kashmir also. We should not have any kind of complacency about what is likely to happen.

*** *** ***

... I myself praised Smt. Indira Gandhi for her role in the Bangladesh affair. I am not ashamed to say that I myself praised her publicly in the Central Hall in a special function. But you should not expect forces in Pakistan who are the real people who count; they may be stronger than the Prime Minister of Pakistan to forgive us. They are certainly out for revenge or vengeance. This is one aspect of it. The other aspect is to internationalise the issue, embarrass India and isolate India which they have failed to do up till

now. There was a list of even Islamic countries who have not come out openly in support of Pakistan's stand on Kashmir. They have failed miserably. That is to the credit of our Government. Therefore, we should be vigilant and we should keep ourselves fully prepared. We are heartened by the assurances given repeatedly by the Government. If Pakistan takes it into its head, which I do not think they will, and if they try to launch any kind of military adventure across the border, we should be more than prepared to meet them and repel them. I think they also know that very well. So, internal unity of the country is no less important and that has to be demonstrated before the whole world and we should not be fighting and squabbling with each other always. The main thing is secular ideas and our fundamental commitment to secularism. India is a country which we are proud of. It is a multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-cultural country. It is that whole composition which makes up India which has baffled the people in the West. The Europeans and the Americans cannot understand as to how a country like this has survived for so many years without breaking up and going into pieces. In fact, they write volumes on that. They cannot understand it as to how the Indian people, inspite of all these differences, variations, religions, languages, cultures and all that, manage to hold together and keep the country united for the last forty years. We should assure them that this will continue and that the country is not going to be broken up. We are not going to allow the country to be broken up by any kind of extremist or sectarian ideas which are wrong ideas which put our people against each other. They provoke them to fight among each other. So, that will be our doom. Therefore, Sir, I conclude by saying that we are supporting the Government on the initiatives which they have decided to take in respect of Kashmir and we should help them with further suggestions and proposals. We should also help them by contributing something in Kashmir for the revival of political activity. You say that your party is stronger and National Conference is very strong. So, show us the way. We reaffirm our allegiance and loyalty on all possible occasions. We will try to keep the people together.

I do not think that Kashmir will be lost since we have all come together and we have sufficient strength to keep the Kashmiri people with us. Territory and the land can always be kept because the army is there. Army can keep the territory, but they cannot keep the minds and the hearts of the people together. That only we can do here, working together. Therefore, let us act with a sense of real responsibility and in a proper spirit of secularism and go ahead so that this chapter can be closed, though it is going to take a long, long time; much bloodshed, sacrifice and a large effort would be required.

It is not a matter which we would be able to settle in a day or two. Even realising that let us all put our shoulders together in the interest of the country.

NATIONAL CONSENSUS ON JAMMU AND KASHMIR*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I was very much disappointed by the speech or the statement—whatever you may like to call it—made by the hon. Minister of Home Affairs when introducing this discussion. As usual, we do not see beyond the end of our nose. Now the period of six months is coming to an end. Something has to be done. Do, what better than to get this period of President's Rule extended for another six months and then hope for the best. We did this exercise in the case of Punjab, I think, seven or eight times. I have forgotten the exact number of times we did it. Everytime, hope is expressed that during the period of extension, the period of—next six months, the situation will improve. Well, it may improve. But that depends on what your strategy is going to be. What is the strategy that the Government is thinking of which will turn the situation or help to turn the situation in Kashmir in favour of this democratic process or political process?—Whatever we are talking about. There is no inkling of that in the Home Minister's statement.

Sir, as far as I can make out, the Government is very wrongly trying to extract some satisfaction from some improvement in the law and order situation there. But I think there is no ground for that at all. I need not go into that at all because every now and then something happens there which shows either that militants or the security forces—and in the case of the security forces it is much more important—commit some excess; some excesses are committed; some incidents take place which put the clock back again. So, what is the political strategy going to be for the next six months so that really when we come to the end of that period we do not have to think of a Constitutional Amendment which is a most undesirable thing in dealing with a matter like this.

We all know what the militants in the Valley have broadly been divided into two Groups: the Hizbul Mujahideen and the J&K Liberation Front. I have no means of making a correct assessment of which of them is now in a stronger position or weaker position though, I believe, with the help that has been coming recently from the ISI of Pakistan that has helped the Hizbul Mujahideen with more sophisticated arms, with better supplies of weapons and all that, to put the J&K Liberation Front at some disadvantage. But one

* Taking part in the discussion on the Continuance of Proclamation in relation to Jammu and Kashmir; *L.S. Deb.*, 25 February 1993.

should remember that Hizbul Mujahideen which is backed by the Jamat-e-Islami always stood for complete independence from India and going with Pakistan. Their openly declared aim was that Kashmir must be made part of Pakistan which is not the aim of the J&K Liberation Front. J&K Liberation Front while it has been demanding *aazadi*, independence, has also said that we have no wish or desire to join Pakistan. We want an independent Kashmir, whatever it means.

My friend Shri George Fernandes, MP, has said that the time must come. When will it come when we make a serious effort to open some talks, some negotiations with some elements within this set up of militants? You cannot talk to Hizbul Mujahideen. It is not possible because nobody in this country is going to accept for a single moment that we should agree to the demand of Kashmir going to Pakistan. But what about the J&K Liberation Front? I do not think that their demand, however wrong it is for independence, is necessarily a demand which can be called as being fundamentalist or anti-secular. It may be something which has arisen out of the dissatisfaction of the people in the Valley with the present set up there. And we should try to find out what those points are. you ever get down to talking to them,—I hope you will some time—I am afraid, one of the questions which you will not be able to avoid is the question of quantum of the autonomy. The time has come historically when the question of the quantum of autonomy that Kashmir is to have will have to be discussed at the negotiating table. It cannot be either complete independence from India or complete merger with India without any provision. That situation has gone long ago. I do not know if the Government has the courage to openly do that. We are prepared to discuss the quantum of autonomy across the table. It is the only way in which you can defuse this propaganda which is going on that within India, we will never have any democratic rights.

Anyway, now the question, the main thing is the alienation of the people. The alienation of the people of the Valley from India, from the Centre, from the Central Government, is the biggest obstacle, stumbling block to be able to make any progress. And I also do not have the time to go into the long history on how this alienation has taken place, what mistakes that have been committed, what blunders which have been committed. Let us not go into all this. There is no point in it. But the point is while it is true as the hon. Home Minister said that due to excesses committed by the militants as happened in Punjab also—extortion of money, molesting of women and demanding ransom—the people are turning against the, militants also. That does not mean that their alienation from the Centre here in India has become less. It is not. And we have to devote our mind to that problem. That is what we must try to overcome.

The first thing I would say is, and I may remind the Home Minister and he knows it very well, that some of us had discussed this particular question threadbare with the Prime Minister himself, some four or five months ago. He gave a very sympathetic hearing to our demand. He said that the first thing to do is this. The present bureaucratic set up which is there in Kashmir has got to be radically changed. What kind of Government is there. There is a Governor. I have nothing against him personally. But there is a Governor and there are some officials and bureaucrats. Laterally after much pressure it was agreed that some sort of body of advisers to the Governor would be sent. Political advisor is not what we had asked for. We said, that these advisors must be politically minded people, people, with some political affiliations and connections.

As far as the Governor and other officers are concerned, all my reports are that they are completely isolated from the general mass of people. Things have come to such a pass now that the Governor, when he travels from Srinagar airport to Raj Bhavan, even that journey has to be made by helicopter. He cannot travel by road and once he is back in the Raj Bhavan, he does not go out. He sits in the Raj Bhavan, in his office with his papers, files and all that and that is the end of the matter. The officials are also like that. There is no communication with the people. There is nobody to talk to the people. There is nobody to hear what the people want to say, what grievances they have got, what representations they want to make. There is nobody at this end; there is no grievance redressal machinery. It is like a stonewall which they are up against. This way you can never change your relationship with the people of the Valley.

We have told the Prime Minister that the very concept of this Advisory Body of the Governor should be changed. They should primarily be political people, whom you feel that you can rely on. Perhaps, you would not like to have somebody from the BJP. I do not know. I do not find any harm if one Advisor is from the BJP. He would learn a few things too, if he had to talk to the people in the Valley.

But, anyway, they must be political minded people, who do not sit only in their offices and rooms. They must have the courage to go out and talk to people, meet people, listen to them, hear their views, hear their grievances, try to satisfy them, give them some relief and do something. They must feel that there is some sympathetic administration which, at the present moment, is totally missing.

As my friend, Shri Saifuddin* said, there are some Advisors appointed now but, they are absolutely powerless. As far as I know, a few occasional

* Referring to Shri Saifuddin Choudhary, MP

meetings are held. That is all. We have got one fellow there. He tells me that nothing happens. They are not told what they are supposed to do. They have no facilities to go and meet people. If there is nothing, then what is the use? So, please look into this matter. This is very urgent matter. If this continues for another four or five months, at the end of that period, we will again be back to square one. And again, you will say that the President's rule should be extended.

Sir, I believe that there are a few top officers—I do not want to name any body here. It is not fair. If you like, I can give my suggestions privately to the Home Minister—who need to be changed. Please remember that it is overwhelmingly a Muslim majority State. It does not mean that you must have Muslim officers there. I never say that. In fact, it is better to have non-Muslim officers, provided they are people who are not communalised, I regret to say that, as we find in many offices of the country, the administration today has become thoroughly communalised. The lessons of the last two and a half months bring this out much more sharply. So, they must be people with some commitment, some devotion to secular ideas and secular principles, to deal with people.

As far as the Kashmiri Pundits are concerned, a very dangerous situation is being created. A psychology is being spread that it is not possible for non-Muslims to live in the Valley and all non-Muslims must come out from the Valley and live either in Jammu or come to Delhi or go to somewhere else. The traditional unity of Hindu-Muslim Kashmiris living in Kashmir is being broken now. And it appears as though the Muslims can be confined only to the Valley without any non-Muslims there and all the others must come out. It is a dangerous thing and in the long run, it will lead to very serious repercussions throughout the country. We must resist this; we must fight against these wrong ideas. As somebody here has said, all conditions must be created—I do not say that it can be done overnight magically but, conditions must be created—for the bulk of these Kashmiri Pundits to return to Kashmir, to return to the Valley. Many of them, I know. Most of them are Government employees. They have come away, may be out of panic, out of fear. Maybe in some cases, they were threatened. Though it is a fact, the Government should tell us something. How many Hindus were killed? How many Hindus in the Valley were actually attacked and killed by the militants, which created the situation where it was inevitable for them to run away? Please tell us. I believe that panic played a big part, I do not underrate the effect of that kind of a situation, naturally. But how many people's jobs are still there? Jobs have not gone away; jobs have not been taken away; they are entitled to their salaries and everything else. Once a month, they can draw their salaries, but they do not go back. The jobs are there. Why should that be? Why should not we create conditions and encourage them to go back so that they can live together there, again, as Hindus and Muslims?

As far as the propaganda about the destruction of temples and all that goes, I do not want to add to what has been said here already. There are some issues which are being deliberately made into issues of misinformation, in order to create a poisonous atmosphere. One is the temple construction thing on which the Government refuses to say anything. Everybody is talking about it. Shri Khurana is talking, Shri Advani is talking, journalists are talking; but the Government's lips are sealed and they do not say anything about it.

Another thing which is being spread like anything is about the migrants from Bangladesh. Of course, there are migrants from Bangladesh; nobody denies it. But an impression is sought to be given by one-way-propaganda here, that the country is being flooded and is in danger of being flooded out by Muslims coming from Bangladesh, illegally, and that will have a great implication for the security of our country after some time. Well, nobody wants that people should come here illegally and people who are not citizens of India should live here and perhaps get some facilities also for which the Indian citizens are entitled to. I agree; but the Government must get hold of some information and tell us as to who are coming? Are they all Muslims who are coming and no Hindus are coming here? We, in our State of West Bengal, have border with Bangladesh all along, we see the people coming and going. I can tell you that 90 per cent of them are so poor that they come out of conditions of poverty and unemployment. Some of them come, get hold of some daily job, earn something and go back again; and come back again. I do not say, it is justified. After all, this impression which is being created, led Shri Khurana,* the other day in Delhi, to threaten that he would lead a big march of people to two Colonies here-one in Okhla near the Jamia Milia Colony and another in Chittaranjan Park, to find out all the secret immigrants, anti-Indian people and throw them out. Who is he to do it, I do not know, in any case. He wanted to take the law into his own hands. But it was resisted. It was resisted by the mobilisation of the people in those areas—Hindus and Muslims together. They said, "We are not going to allow these places to be converted into another Bombay." So, he had to retreat., But the Government should tell us something. What is the Government doing?

*** *** ***

About relations between India and Pakistan, that is vital, I think, for solution of this Kashmir problem eventually. The Simla Agreement provided for bilateral discussions on this issue and not to allow any third parties to come in. Some people in Pakistan tried to violate every now and then. But we have stood firm on that issue. Now, I would like to know why cannot we take some initiative at some time to broach the idea of there being a bilateral

*Referring to Shri Madan Lal Khurana.

discussion between Pakistan and India, work out the whole details of the thing on what are the issues, what is the basis for such a discussion. If Pakistan refuses, well it is their headache. We do not stand to lose anything. But we should not seem to show that we do not take any initiative in this matter at all. It is in our interest.

I believe the people in the Valley in the beginning of this insurgency were very much hopeful of the fact that Pakistan would come to their aid. The Pakistan's Army will come to liberate them. We will be liberated and all the rest of it. But then disillusionment has also set in. Everybody there knows now that Pakistan Army is not coming. Why should it come? It is more convenient for them to go on supplying arms and weapons to these militants, to these insurgents. Pakistan Army would not come. The Kashmiris know it. But this is the time when we should take some initiative to break this deadlock.

As far as our excesses, which are being alleged and being made globally now a big issue against us, of human rights are concerned, excesses by security forces, this is a serious matter which the Government would be well advised to look into. Shri George Fernandes has mentioned the instance in Sopore which was a very ghastly kind of incident that took place. I am sure, hundreds of Sopores on a smaller scale may be taking place also. We know that is the way the Army is trained unfortunately. If Army is given this kind of duties—policing operations—to deal with a civilian population, the risk of this kind of thing happening is there because the Army has a particular kind of training. We know how they operated in Sri Lanka also. When you deal with the civilian population, of a convoy of the Army is going along the road and somebody from a wayside village throws one bomb or a granade or something on that convey, well that whole Army detachment will get down and burn that village to the ground. That is the way they have been taught to deal in guerrilla warfare with this kind of civilian fighters. It would not do here. These are our people. You cannot have reprisals of this type against civilians. This Sopore thing has really done a lot of harm to our image—I should think—and all kinds of outfits abroad, who claim to be the champions of human rights, are trying to haul India up even in international fora on these questions. So, we must anticipate this and we must be firm in our resolve to take action against anybody, even of our security forces. I know one or two cases where some action has been taken against some officers or jawans. They cannot be spared because then discipline will not be maintained. If the discipline of our security forces breaks down or begins to break down, then that is the end of many things. Therefore, please see that these excesses are controlled and punished.

Lastly, I want to say and I want also to support what has been said here by two of my colleagues about the economic rehabilitation of the people of the Valley. Unemployed young men, frustrated young men and angry young

men are the best possible fodder for the militants. We must look into these matters more deeply. We know what the economy of Kashmir is and how much it was dependent on factors which no longer operate. These people are being destroyed economically. Tourism has gone; handicraft business has gone; tourist trade has gone and I presume that fruits are still being grown there but I do not know how much of it can come out of the Valley. Employment is heavily loaded against the local young people, particularly in Government offices and public sector institutions and all that. This cannot be allowed to go on like this because you will always be able to get a hearing from them. And this was happening in other places also. So, we should attend to these matters and see as to what kind of workable and feasible schemes can be devised under the present situation to help these people to get a proper and decent livelihood.

I would just conclude by mentioning the name of Mr. H.N. Wanchoo who was one of our friends and who was killed only the other day. He refused to leave the Valley. He was working among the Hindus and Muslims. He was considered internationally also to be a champion of civil rights and human rights; he was a very brave and fearless man and was acting as a sort of a bridge sometimes between the two communities, between the militants and others. He was shot but nobody knows who killed him. There are all kinds of reports afloat that his activities were not liked by a section of the police also and may be that they wanted to do away with him, I do not know about it. When he died, there was a *hartal* almost throughout the Valley in which both Hindus and Muslims participated in protest against his killing. But we need a lot of Wanchoos and not only one. They may be killed or anything may happen. But there must be fearless people who are willing to stake their lives there for the cause of secularism and try to bring the two communities together and to restore peace and normalcy.

I conclude by appealing to the Home Minister and through him to the Prime Minister and to the entire Government of India to not to take this thing as a technical way of getting out this six months' commitment. We have to do something. We have to evolve some strategy. The Home Minister is good enough to address a letter a few weeks ago to the leaders of all political parties, I believe, on this issue on Kashmir saying that he is going to initiate some series of consultations and talks with all of us so that we can devise some way. So, I am waiting for that; I welcome it. I hope that some serious look will be given to this problem which is dragged too long and is dragging the name of our country into the mud. We must show that we are capable of solving it and I believe we can solve it if we all treat it as a national issue of topmost priority. We can solve it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, on this question of autonomy, whether it applies to Jammu and Kashmir or whether it is meant to apply to any other State, to any other part of the country, first of all, we have to be clear—whether in making this proposal or raising this demand, they must explain what in their understanding is the definition of autonomy. What is the content of that autonomy?

Until that is made clear, that particular demand or definition cannot merit either the support of the Opposition, or of the people. Does autonomy mean secession from India? That people are asking for autonomy because they want to get out of India. If that is so—it can be put like that—obviously it is not going to get any support, neither from this House nor from any of the major political parties not in fact from the mover of this Resolution himself. Because I think already Shri Farooq Abdullah, the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, who has moved this Resolution in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, and got it passed, when he was asked later on. What is its relation to the question of secession? Does it amount to contemplating secession from India? Shri Farooq Abdullah was very very critical and vehement in saying that there is no question of secession. We are part of India and we will remain part of India. That is what he said. That is on record and it has appeared in the Press.

So, Sir, I think this question of autonomy has to be demarcated, and not mixed up with question of devolution of powers, and devolution of financial resources to the States.

As you know very well, such a proposal had been recommended, on a priority basis, by the Sarkaria Commission. The devolution of powers and devolution of financial resources to the States should not be mixed up with the concept of autonomy. So, I think, what the Sarkaria Commission had recommended, will be generally supported and should be generally supported by everybody. But can it mean that, in the concept of autonomy, the Centre will keep with it only four or five subjects, namely, Defence, External Affairs, Communications, Railways and so on and all the rest will become the

* Participating in the discussion under Rule 193 on the Resolution passed by the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly for Autonomy; *L.S. Deb.*, 3 August 2000.

responsibilities of the States? I think, in today's India, such a concept is not going to be acceptable.

Sir, I remember that two or three years ago, there was a big agitation going on in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the Kashmir Valley on the slogan of *'azaadi'*. If you had asked anybody in the Kashmir Valley at that time as to what they wanted, their reply was: "we want *'azaadi'*." What is the meaning of *'azaadi'*? We know that the translation of the word, *'azaadi'* into English means 'independence', 'freedom' but, at that time, nobody bothered to explain what the people who were putting forward this slogan actually wanted to mean by it. In any case, if that *'azaadi'* were to mean 'freedom' or 'independence' it would amount to secession. So, there is no question of supporting that slogan of *'azaadi'*, if it means that.

Sir, India is our motherland. It is the land of many different cultures, many different languages, different levels of development and, I think, because the levels of development vary so much from each other and some regions and some States are lagging far behind development-wise, can be considered backward in the sense, particularly, of economic development or industrial development, there is a general clamour, for some time, in the country for autonomy.

*** *** ***

What I was saying is that because of the great discrepancies in development between different States and different regions—it is not surprising—there is a general clamour in the country. Somewhere the clamour is more strident. Somewhere it may be less strident. But generally, there is clamour in the country for autonomy. That autonomy does not mean secession. I think, that autonomy means levelling up the levels of development in the States which are lagging behind, which in the views of the people living there have been neglected or have not got their due share of development. That should be remedied.

We have also to remember that when we are dealing with this subject in the context of Jammu and Kashmir, we have to be clear who we are talking about. Jammu and Kashmir is not one State in that sense. There is a Valley which is predominantly Muslim. There is Jammu which is predominantly Hindu. There is Ladakh which is predominantly Buddhist. These three parts of Kashmir are there. We may try to make out some general solution which will satisfy the people of all these three regions. I think, it will be quite a difficult job. But we must remember that Kashmir has a history which is different from that of most other States. I am talking about the history or the whole story of accession to India. I do not want to go into that old story. Everybody knows about it very well. But that history of accession or no

accession-howsoever the Maharaja, at that time, played with this idea—actually provides the essential background to the whole question of article 370. Article 370 has come into existence and become a part and parcel of the Constitution because of this highly complicated history or story which we passed through when the question of accession was being discussed in Kashmir. You know, there were forces in favour of accession. There were forces against accession. There were forces which tried to impose their will by force of arms, by violence and the country had to pass through many types of situations before they were in a position. And I will remind you that it was not the Maharaja who was the ruler technically, legally, constitutionally and formally.

It was not him but it was the National Conference headed by Sheikh Abdullah, the father of the present Chief Minister. He was the undisputed leader of the then National Conference because of the stand he took and because of his capability of rousing and mobilising the people there in favour of accession to India, and against the conspiracy which was being hatched, I should say, by the then Maharaja...

So, the background to article 370 must be remembered, why it is not common to all States. It was something peculiar to this particular State and it brought about article 370. What does it mean to the common man in Kashmir? When you talk to him about accession to India, no cessation from India, article 370, special rights, and so on, which have been bestowed upon that State and its people, do you think that the common man in Kashmir think so? How do they interpret it? They are not very highly educated people. We all know about the level of education of the common people in Kashmir. It is pretty low. It is not their fault. That is the situation. I think, on both these issues, namely of development, economic development, development which will lead to some prosperity for the common man, which will provide jobs for the common people, which will do away with a lot of their suffering, which is due basically to poverty, and so on, he hopes that this demarcation of article 370 will help him and help the people there to reap the fruits of the kind of development which he would like.

Have we been able to do that in all these years that have been passed? I am not going into all those chapters when the people of Kashmir physically resisted the Pakistani invaders who came from Pakistan and so on. We all know that story. It is a story which should not be forgotten ever but for them we would have lost Kashmir. But anyway, we have not been able to bring about the development of the type, I think, which the common man would appreciate and like, in all these years.

The second thing is that their hope is democracy—democratic governance, that is according to the wishes of the common people as expressed through the only method that we have—that is through the polls, through the elections,

through the verdict of the people. The democratic governance should be in conformity with the views expressed by the people through elections. Can we say that in Kashmir we have succeeded in this matter also? I do not think so, if we are frank enough. Elections have been held repeatedly many times. But I should say that it is regrettable that many times the verdict of these elections has been distorted. Some other state of affairs has been imposed on the people, which did not correspond to their free choice as expressed through the verdict of the polls. Shall we go into all that now? I think it is not necessary. What happened in repeated elections? People voted for some particular leader or they voted for a particular Party and later on, things were manoeuvred in such a way that some other force, some other person, some other leader was imposed on the people, not for whom they have voted. This has happened repeatedly. That is something which I think has embittered the people of Kashmir very much. It has destroyed the credibility of elections and the electoral process. Free and fair elections are something which became practically unknown to Kashmir and the Kashmiri people and this is continued till recently.

So, another part of democratic governance is, of course, that people should be liberated as far as possible from corruption, corruption of the people who are ruling, who are in power, whether they be Ministers or whether they be bureaucrats or whether they be those officials who are in positions of power. Unless their control through corrupt means, their control over the affairs of the State is removed, how do we expect these poor people of Kashmir, who are so poor, uneducated generally, to feel that this new dispensation, article 370, elections, freedom and all that has brought a new state of affairs for them? It cannot be done. So many of the ills from which we are suffering today in Kashmir, not all, but many of them or most of them I should say, are basically due to this historical origin of what happened from that time. We have failed to develop the State in a way which would bring, which would make some sense, make some feeling of prosperity to the common people. We have failed also in giving a firm foundation to the democratic system and for having failed on these counts, corruption has been rampant. It is no use hiding these things. Corruption has been rampant in Kashmir. Everybody knows about it.

Regarding diversion of Central funds, I do not know what is the total amount of Central funds which by now have been poured into Kashmir from the Centre in the hope that it would lead to development and so on. I do not know what part of those Central funds has been diverted and used for other purposes. But when you go there, you ask the common man in Kashmir. You must have been to that place several times. When you go there, see what he says, see what he feels about the people who are in power and about the way they handle the money which is meant to be used for the uplift of those common people. But it is not used for them.

There was a mention made here of the latest Finance Commission's Report which we may be discussing soon in this House also and they have proposed, as you know, some new share of Central funds. For that part of funds of the Centre, which are shareable with the States or can be developed on the States, they have made a new formula, as you know. And what part of those funds will really be used for the purpose they are meant, we do not know, but I have my doubts. We are extremely sceptical in view of what has happened in the past.

So, I do not wish to take up more time. About autonomy, we are discussing a resolution which has been adopted by the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly at the instance of Dr. Farooq Abdullah and which was of course, as I said earlier, when he was asked to clarify when he met the Central leaders—the Cabinet—I am going by what he said in the Press when he was asked what he meant by it; he was very categorical to say that he did not mean secession. There was no question of getting out of India. I hope that that is really what he means and he sticks to it and I hope that the people of Kashmir also will stick to it. As far as we are concerned, in the House here we are certainly against any secession from India.

But the question is now that a formula has to be worked out, it can only be done by an agreement; a formula of what exactly should be the definition of the contents of autonomy. If you want to use the term 'autonomy', then it has to be defined. And, what powers will go where, what powers will be reserved by the Centre and what will be developed as far as the State is concerned, this cannot be a battle between two sides trying to impose something on the other. It will not work. It has to be the result of agreement, of discussion, of consultation, working out a formula as recommended also partly by Mr. Justice Sarkaria, but not adequately. It has to be worked out.

So, as far as the Valley is concerned, which is the centre of so much turmoil and disturbance, so many killings, so many people have lost their lives in the Valley and not only ordinary people, security forces also have lost heavily. But that thing is not over yet. And this cross-border terrorism and the attempt, which is going on by the neighbouring State and you have seen what has happened yesterday. It is with more anguish that one does talk about these things that here is something happening and after all these years, we,—a great country like India,—are not in a position to frustrate the evil designs and check this kind of cross-border terrorism. It is unthinkable that so many of our citizens should be butchered like this in the space of a short time and we are proved to be powerless and not able to do anything about it.

So, now, once this question of autonomy has been put on the table, I do not think that it can be brushed aside. Of course, I know that not only the

Central Government, the Central Cabinet rejected it, just rejected it, very good.

If rejecting it like that really amounts to a rejection in the minds of the people and rejection like that means a rejection in the minds of the ruling Party in Kashmir and its leaders, that is well and good. But will it be like that? It is an explosive concept. Once it has been put on the table, you may be able to get over it by prolonged and constant discussions, consultations and try to come to some agreement and so on. But, I am afraid, it is not something which can easily be dispensed with.

So, the position has become highly complicated now. I would like the Centre and the spokesman representing the Centre, to take this House more into confidence and tell us what exactly they felt when they discussed it at the Centre; what exactly they thought was the meaning of this demand for autonomy because after that they met Dr. Farooq Abdullah and talked to him. According to the Press, what Dr. Abdullah said has also made them feel very happy...

The last thing which I was saying is that the summary rejection of this slogan of autonomy and demand for autonomy by the Central Cabinet and the Government obviously mean that, at that time, the Centre had its idea of autonomy, as meaning something thoroughly detrimental to the interests of this country. I presume, that they would say that the way it was put forward, we took it to mean a demand for secession from India, and therefore, we summarily rejected it. But shortly after that Dr. Farooq Abdullah was called to Delhi or he came on his own, I do not know, and he had consultations with the Central leaders, including the hon. Prime Minister, the hon. Minister of Home Affairs. He is reported to have assured them that whatever it may mean, it may never mean secession. He will always be a part of India and there is no question of leaving India. That was an assurance, which, perhaps, was accepted by the Centre, and they were happy. Previously they were unhappy. After this assurance, they are happy.

After that comes this incident at Pahalgam and this butchering of our people. I do not know how many times this will be repeated. I am really afraid because we seem to be too powerless and too weak to defend our own people and our country. I do not think that we are powerless. I think, we have got the power, but somehow or other, we are unable to use it properly. So, I would like to hear from the Central Government how they have been looking at it, from the moment it has been raised and brought on the agenda, how they looked at it then, how they looked at it now and how they looked at it after yesterday's and today's events. It may be a part of it. You cannot brush that aside. I am really anguished. As an Indian, I feel bitter and I feel anguished.

We have to see the past history as far as the record of governance or misgovernance goes; the past history as far as corrupt practices go; the past history as far as the failure to develop the beautiful country in a direction which will really bring some succour to the poverty-stricken people of the country.

I am again not going into all that now. There is no point. Everything was drowned in the sound of gunfire. Just as we are beginning to congratulate ourselves and pat ourselves on the back, comes the sound of gunfire from the militants. And then we are left gasping for breath.

So, Sir, this is all I have to say. Obviously, we cannot support that Resolution on autonomy, not at least unless and until we know from the authors of that Resolution what they mean by it or what do they want to do. We would also like to know as to what is the interpretation as far as our Government is concerned. I leave aside the question of secession and separation from India and all that is concerned. There is no question of anybody accepting anything like that.

Then what? What is the quantum; what is the definition? What is going to be the fate of Ladakh and Jammu? That is another big problem, big headache for us. I presume the Centre has discussed these things, at least in their own circles and they would be in a position to take this House into confidence and tell us something about it. As far as we are concerned, we cannot support those ideas of autonomy which seem to have been very much in fashion recently or which are the ideas in the heads of the people who are waiting to destroy the unity of this country.

Before we finally decide what stand we should take, we would like to hear from our Central Government and its rulers as to what exactly they are thinking and how they have seen this whole thing and what their concept of it is?

I hope, Sir, that you will permit not only all the Parties to express their viewpoints which are here to be expressed—they, of course, will be expressed—but, above all else we must know what the Central Government is thinking on this issue.

INTERNAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

OPTIMUM UTILIZATION OF THE DEFENCE ALLOCATION*

I rise to add a few words in support of the hon. member, Major Ranjeet Singh's plea for a new Committee of Parliament members to be set up, to be taken into confidence on defence matters, and also to act as some sort of an advisory body, at least to the Government on this question. Our party is dissatisfied with the functions and the role of these Informal Consultative Committees, which are attached to the various Ministries. And certainly, as far as defence matters are concerned, a Consultative Committee of that type is not serving any useful purpose whatsoever.

My hon. friend, Shri Narendra Singh Mahida, just now said that it is not possible to discuss defence matters openly in Parliament. Of course, these are relative terms, because we have seen that in Parliament in Britain or even in the US Congress, very much more is discussed than we are permitted ever to discuss or even to receive information on, in this House. Nevertheless, I agree with him that there is a certain field which cannot be opened up perhaps for public discussion always. For this reason, this type of committee suggested here is, I think, a very good and sound idea.

There are two aspects to this question. One is that of national defence from the security point of view, which is a notional question transcending all political differences. There is also the financial implication. I shall just refer to this briefly because I find that a former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Shri H.V.R. Iengar, is reported in the Press as having said at a meeting of the Rotary Club of Calcutta on 13 February that in his opinion, the basic cause of the present economic recession in the country is what he describes as the gigantic defence expenditure we are having to incur. Nobody has grudged this to the Government since 1962 when the defence budget was boosted up to its present proportions of 800 to 900 crores of rupees per year, when we have felt that it is necessary for the defence of the country. But the time has come when everybody in the country is seriously concerned over the question as to whether this money is being properly spent or not, how much of it is being wasted, what part of it is put to infructuous or unproductive purposes and whether the money that is being expended can be put to better use or not.

---

* Participating in the debate on the Resolution regarding the Defence Needs of India; *L.S. Deb.*, 23 February 1968.

I have a suggestion to make. I think the time has come after six years when this kind of defence budget outside the general budget should no longer be permitted as a luxury or an extravagance. It is time the defence budget was incorporated in the general budget and made part of it so that it could be budgeted for as a whole on the basis of whatever available resources there are in the country, and could be discussed and debated in that way. This allotment of Rs. 800-900 crore giving a sort of blank cheque to the Defence Ministry to do what they like with it, and then not being answerable to the House in the sense that whenever certain questions are raised, the veil of secrecy in the name of public interest descends upon it, is something which I think we should give the go-by to.

Only recently, the Estimates Committee reported on one aspect of defence. I was glad to see it the other day. I have not had time to study it. But I notice one point which some of us have been making repeatedly, year after year, in the discussion on defence matters that more money should be allotted for defence research, not less. Because we find that the amount devoted to defence research in our country is proportionately much less than is spent by other countries. The essence of our defence programme should be self-reliance so that more should be spent on indigenous research by our defence scientists in research laboratories in this country so that we become less and less dependent on external sources.

The Estimates Committee has more or less substantiated this criticism and suggested that this amount should be increased. It is much too niggardly now. These matters are there. There is no time to go into details.

I will just refer briefly to one matter which troubles us, the question of self-sufficiency in aircraft. For example, I know it is very difficult now overnight to become self-sufficient in all types of aircraft required for modern military operations. But we have to progress towards that. Some good work has been done—I do not deny it. But we find from reports available to us that the Government is dabbling, in so many types and varieties of projects that the essence which should be there of a minimum amount of standardisation in aircraft, which is linked up with the question of spare parts, components and everything, that aspect is being neglected very seriously which may land us in very great difficulties.

For example, we know that Hawker-Hunter aircraft have been purchased from Britain. We have had to purchase them outright. The expenditure is not disclosed to us on the ground of public interest. This was the reply given to a question yesterday or the day before.

We are told that certain planes have been bought from Italy, diverted from somewhere else. That was not divulged. In reply to my question, it was

said that it was not in public interest to disclose details. Anyway we can assume that large amounts of money are involved and we know that modern aircraft are very expensive things. Thus large sums are spent for the direct purchase of combat planes from outside. At the same time we have not been told about all our projects which are on hand for so many years. For instance, we are not told about the HF 24 project. It was to become a supersonic plane. It was held up for technical reasons. Perhaps you will say that we cannot discuss all that in the House. Therefore, I should like a committee like that where we can know at least something about these things. What has happened to the Indo-UAR project? Some persons are in favour of it; others are against it. As far as I know, Government has not given up that project. For how many more years will it go on and when is it anticipated to be ready? It was to have a supersonic engine from the UAR and an aircraft body built in India. There is then the MIG project. When it stabilises itself, it can make us self-reliant in one type of fighter aircraft. Progress reports about that project also are not made available because of public interest. I was amazed to find that an amount of Rs. 8 lakh had been advanced by the Government to an American gentleman, Alan Bragg, to set up a workshop in Simla in the mountains. I have seen it myself from a distance; I do not think I shall be allowed to enter it. The Ministry of Defence thought that he was an expert in designing helicopters and he is supposed to develop some prototype of helicopter for our Air Force. Several years have passed and my reports indicate that the machine he has designed had failed to get off the ground; it is static. Several Defence Ministry experts had been visiting that place to see the progress but I do not know what their report is. At the same time we are buying helicopters from foreign sources and some are being developed at Bangalore. Yet so many lakhs of our money are spent on this project. He is a US citizen living in this country. I cannot understand what is going on.

When we talk of defence expenditure, it is not because we are against any defence effort. But surely this country and the Parliament are entitled to know whether this money is spent properly or wasted on useless projects. That is why I say that this idea of having, a committee is quite attractive. We know the bottlenecks in various ordnance factories. We know that Ambajhari and Chanda projects were facing difficulties. At one stage the Americans and the British stopped giving us aid and the know-how and so these were held up. Where are we going to discuss these matters? We must discuss it somewhere, if not here. I thank you for the opportunity you have given me and I strongly support the idea behind this resolution. The form of the committee could be the subject of further discussions but the idea is sound and so I support this resolution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, since yesterday, I am seeing Shri Shinkre** in a new light; yesterday, he passionately advocated the provisions of the Preventive Detention Act and today I find him bitterly opposing this idea of policemen having any trade union or organisation of their own. I do not know whether this change in him has anything to do with the approaching elections. However, it is of course only to be expected...

*** *** ***

...that this Government would bring forward such a Bill. I would be surprised if they did not, but there is a rather tragic or pathetic irony in the whole thing, as to why this particular Bill is being brought forward at this particular time. The Constitution is there since 1950, and this is 1966, and the same powers, under which they are restricting the rights of the police force now, were there for 16 years, but were never exercised in this specific form. So, the first question which the public in this country will not fail to note is that it is being brought forward at a particular moment of time and that is not fortuitous; there is a reason for it. At a time when there is a wave of unrest sweeping the entire country to which we have been referring so many times in this House on so many occasions, an unrest whose mainspring is the economic discontent born out of the suffering and exploitation of the common people of this country, caused by the bankrupt policies of this Government, on the issues of food and prices and economic development and employment and so on. It is just at this time that the Government has become so callous, so bureaucratic in its attitude and so isolated from the conditions, the actual living conditions of the people, that it even forgot that the very policemen on whom it depends also are citizens of this country, humble people, poorly paid people who have got to keep their body and soul and their dependants alive in these very difficult economic circumstances, they forgot that. This is a period when this Government is increasingly showing a propensity for automation. And inconformity with that mental attitude of theirs, of bringing in automation into this country, perhaps they also consider policemen to be

* Participating in the discussion on the Police Forces (Restriction of Rights) Bill, 1966; *L.S. Deb.*, 30 November 1966.

**Referring to Shri M.P. Shinkre, MP

nothing but robots; they want them to be mechanical robots, who know how to fire a gun and wield lathies, who must be without any opinion of their own, any conscience, any kind of power of thinking or anything of that kind of even the bare minimum wherewithal with which they will be able to keep themselves and their families alive: even that, they have become impervious to. And suddenly, on the crest of this popular wave of discontent and unrest sweeping the country, when more and more this Government has to depend only on the police force to suppress that popular movement, then suddenly this Bill is brought forward, because it is found, that in the city of Delhi, some poor, non-gazetted police constables—*Karamcharis* as they call themselves—decided that they should have some sort of union or association to ventilate their grievances regarding the amenities, benefits, pay-scales and so on. So, after 16 years, suddenly this House is called upon to approve of this Bill. It is really rather a pathetic state of affairs: all these years it was never considered necessary at all.

The facts that have come to light about the Delhi policemen's agitation show that—if these facts are correct, I do not know—they have been trying for quite a long time to represent their grievances in various ways, to various people, to the senior officers, the IGs of Police, the Home Ministry, the Lt.-Governor of Delhi; they have approached all these people in various ways, by submitting memoranda and petitions and all that kind of thing. But they never got any kind of hearing or any kind of sympathetic response at any stage and they even, rightly or wrongly, tried to reinforce their demands by such token forms of action,—you might call them—as refusing for one day to take their salaries or going on a fast as a measure of penance, as they declared and as we read it in the papers, and so on.

Now, I want to know, can anybody in this House, can the Minister, can any member on that side or can Shri Shinkre, give a single example or instance to say that during this whole period, when the so-called agitation by these constables has been going on, there has been the slightest dereliction of duty on their part, duty as we understand it according to the disciplinary rules of the police? Can anybody say that at any stage they have not performed their duties? Have they not made it clear, over and over again, that whatever they may do in the way of representing their grievances—they have made it clear—that they will abide by the discipline of their service and they will never stop work or go on strike, and that they will attend to their duties? They have in fact done so on the 7th November, when the famous demonstration demanding a ban on cow-slaughter was taking place outside this House, and so much panic was created in the city of Delhi not only by the demonstrators but by the Government also, by the All-India Radio also. Some members expressed in the House the fear, I remember, that if the police had not done its duty that day, then the sacred, sacrosanct precincts of this House would have been

stormed; they had said so here, on the floor of this House. At that moment they did not fail to note this fact, that even under such a very severe trial that day, how well the police had behaved, how much restraint they had shown. I must say that this is one instance, example, when it cannot be said that the initial provocation came from the side of the police. So, please do not conjure up this terrible, nightmare vision that the moment you say any policeman wanting to raise a demand for better pay, salaries and wanting to form an association, it means that immediately there will be a total breakdown of law and order, because these people are not behaving like that. They are showing some sense of responsibility which I think ought to be commended, instead of being in anyway condemned.

Now, I think the policemen in Delhi wanted to form some sort of non-gazetted *Karamchari* union, and they had drafted a constitution and wanted that to be registered under the Trade Unions Act, which was refused to them. But I am sure the hon. Minister has had an occasion to see that draft constitution, and I am sure that if he has seen it, he knows that they have explicitly, not implicitly, but explicitly in so many words, written into their constitution that they would never under any circumstances resort to strike or be absent from duty or stop their work. They have put that self-restraint on themselves. They have mentioned clearly in their aims and objects of that constitution that they would never go on strike, that they would try to improve the discipline of the forces and also that they would try to eradicate corruption in the police force which I think is a very important thing.

Who does not know that the source of corruption among the poorly paid Government employees and others is the fact very often, that they are not able to make two ends meet, and there is always the temptation to exercise authority, since they are Government personnel, for purposes which lead to corruption? And simply by bottling up those grievances and denying them their legitimate right, you are in a way indirectly, not deliberately but indirectly, encouraging them to resort to corrupt practices.

So, what I would say is, why should not this right of association in some form be given to them. That is what I want to know. Shri Shinkre talked about Government employees being a separate category and all that. But the point is, the right of trade union organisation subject to certain restrictions, of course, is there, and is enjoyed by all Government employees. I want to know what Government employee does not enjoy it. Do they not have trade unions? Are the police performing a duty which is more important than that of workers who are producing weapons for our Armed Forces? The Home Minister who was Defence Minister till a few days ago knows that there are unions in every defence factory. Have these defence workers been accused of dereliction of duty at any time? Have they failed to rise equal to the occasion

when the necessity arose? Are not the railwaymen allowed trade unions, in spite of the fact that if they strike, the entire communication system will be paralysed?

In my opinion, this is not the way to have a satisfied and contended police force. Redress of grievances through collective representation is the best way to remove discontent in a timely way, instead of allowing it to boil up to a stage when it might lead to undesirable consequences. If any attempt is made to suppress the legitimate grievances, I am quite sure they will burst out one day in some form or other. I would request the Government not to try to repeat history. Shri Shinkre made a passing reference to it. May I remind the Government, in 1946, even before the agitation for the release of the INA prisoners, it was the revolt of the policemen which first shook the foundations of the British Government in this country! Please remember what happened in Bihar. At that time the British Government also said the same thing that the police are in charge of law and order and they should not be allowed to form unions to voice their grievances; but, all that the British Government succeeded in doing was to make a national hero out of Shri Ramanand Tiwari, who was the leader of the policemen in Bihar during that strike. He is now a respected opposition member in the Bihar Assembly. He chose to find his political destiny outside the ranks of the ruling party also. He is widely respected in Bihar because of his association with that movement. So, do not try to repeat history.

Whether you call it an association or a trade union, there is no material difference. They should be given the right of collective association with their own constitution and rules, and permitted to put forward their grievances collectively and negotiate with the Government.

Policemen are permitted at the time of election to vote by postal ballot. Many policemen are voters in my constituency who vote by postal ballot. If they are permitted to choose a member of this House, will you also allow them to come and meet an MP, for whom they are entitled to vote? I do not think Government will allow that. If he is found approaching an MP, he would suffer serious consequences.

The whole attitude of the Government is very bad in this respect. I am told that when his predecessor was in charge of the Home Ministry, the Delhi policemen were given some sort of assurance, probably unofficially, I do not know, that their demands would be considered in three separate categories. Firstly the question of immediate interim relief to be given to them as a protection against the rising prices. Secondly the question of overtime allowance, which would be settled directly with them. Some other demands would be taken up for discussion and some other demands would be referred

to the Police Commission which is to be set up to go into their grievances. When the Minister replies, he may kindly give this information as to what has happened about those categories of demands which were to be settled directly or by negotiation outside the scope of the Police Commission. So far as we know, nothing has been done in this regard. Sir on behalf of my party, I totally oppose this Bill.

THE PRIVATE SECURITY GUARDS AND AGENCIES (REGULATION) BILL, 1994*

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I beg to move—

> "That the Bill to provide for the regulation of private security guards and agencies, be taken into consideration."

The Private Security Guards and Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 1994, was introduced in Rajya Sabha on 14.12.1994. The Rajya Sabha referred this Bill for examination by the Parliamentary Committee on Home Affairs. The Committee submitted its report on 28.2.1996 and suggested certain changes/ amendments to the provisions made in the Bill. These changes have been accepted by the Government and have been incorporated in the revised Bill submitted for consideration.

As members are aware that in recent years, there has been a proliferation of private security agencies in India. This is due to the expansion in the number of business establishments, growth in crime and increasing demands for surveillance. The resources of the police are limited and they cannot meet the demand for security services on the scale required. While private agencies have helped meet the needs of business establishments for security of their personnel and property, there has been growing concern about their functioning; many of these agencies conduct their operations without consideration for standards or ethics and if left unchecked can have adverse security implications. There is also the danger of private security firm employees encroaching upon the duties of the police by wearing uniforms which resemble those of the police and using weapons in an illegal manner.

Though a number of Associations for the promotion of security agencies have been formed, including the Security Association of India and the Association and Security Organisation (India), these Associations have also not been able to set proper norms of functioning and ensuring that security agencies of dubious reputation do not proliferate. As would be noticed, the main objectives of the Bill are to set proper norms for the functioning of the Private Security Guards and Agencies in the country and also to bring uniformity, as far as possible, in the regulation of private security agencies.

---

* Moving the Private Security Guards and Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 1994; *R.S. Deb.*, 4 August 1997.

The salient features of the Bill include, *inter alia;*

(i) appointing a Controlling Authority of private security agencies in each State/UT,

(ii) making holding of licenses mandatory for agencies,

(iii) stipulating criteria for obtaining licenses,

(iv) specifying ground for denial, suspension and revocation of licenses, issue of identification cards,

(v) specifying the type of training required for private security guards, and

(vi) specifying the duties of employers and powers of licencing authorities.

The important changes suggested by the Committee are in articles 5, 6, 8 and 13 of the Bill. These changes required: (a) the training of the security guards to be increased from one month to 3 months, (b) the security guards should also preferably be appointed from amongst the ex-servicemen, former Civil and Armed police personnel, Home Guards, (c) the supervisors should also go through the verification of character and antecedents, (d) debarring a company, firm or an association of persons not registered in India, from setting up any security agencies in India, (e) that every private security agency shall maintain a register containing the names, addresses and salaries of supervisors also under its control.

The Ministry of Home Affairs will also consider issuing an amendment to the Arms Act, allowing the issue of licenses to the Private Security Agencies also as per requirement assessed by the licencing authority.

The Bill will not cover private detective agencies at present and will be restricted to private security agencies. Instead, it is proposed to issue administrative guidelines to State Governments and Union territories regarding Private Detective Agencies. Depending on the experience in implementing these guidelines, a decision will be taken on whether or not extend the legislation to cover private detective agencies as well.

With the above words, I commend the Bill on Regulation of Private Security Guards and Agencies for consideration and passing by this august House.

Just a few days ago, when the hon. new Home Minister took office, he was reported—I am quoting the paper.... *The Statesmen* ..... to have said that 'action in a crisis of law and order should be proper, prompt' and that 'the offenders should be dealt with under the law of the land and not under the emergency regulations'.

*** *** ***

He has tried to make out that this is not in any sense an emergency regulation, but is part of the normal law of the land. I have no time to quote for his benefit all the statements which have been made by his predecessors in this House everytime it became necessary for the Government to come forward for approval to extend the life of this PD Act. Each time the assurance has been given and the atmosphere has been sought to be created at that time that this is not in any sense meant to be a permanent statute or that it will remain for ever, for all time to come, on the statute book.

I found from consulting the records that both the late Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant and Shri Gulzari Lal Nanda made it clear repeatedly that this was only an emergency measure meant to deal with an emergent situation, as Shri Minoo Masani has correctly pointed out. And last time, in December 1963, when this House was again asked to give its consent to an extension for a period of three years, Shri Nanda said that not only did he not consider it to be in the nature of a permanent statute for all time but he said it can be repealed even before these three years are out. So at any rate, continuously this effort was made to show that this is something in the nature of a temporary legislation. And yet, now we find that once again the same permission is being sought for another period of three years and because of the brute majority which the ruling party enjoys in this House, they know that they can secure that extension.

During the years when the Defence of India Rules (DIR) were being allowed full play before the assurance which was recently given that the DIR would not be used or its use would be limited in most parts of the country, with the exception of a few border areas, during these years this Act remained

* Participating in the debate on the Preventive Detention (Continuance) Bill, 1966; *L.S. Deb.*, 21 November 1966.

on the statute book, but it was held in reserve. It was held in reserve precisely with this motive that when sooner or later the day came when it would no longer be possible to justify the use of the Defence of India Rules, then again this weapon would be brought out from the reserve armoury of the Government and would be used to fill the gap which all this time, since 1962, had been filled by the Defence of India Rules.

This is in any sense nothing but a very blatant substitute for the Defence of India Rules whose use is now limited, very greatly limited, because the very changing situation has compelled the Government, the force of public opinion forced the Government, to agree to that limitation, but not content with that, they have brought forward this legislation, this discredited, lawless law from its own armoury so that the gap which is sought to be created by limitation of the DIR is now filled by this Preventive Detention Act.

Shri Nanda, speaking in this House last time, on the 17th and 18th December, 1963, had said. "Who are the people involved? They are spies, persons who have been detained because they harbour dacoits, and they are persons who inflame the communal passions." He pinpointed these three categories of people. Of course, he left it to the imagination of the House and the country that all other people whom the Government disliked would be dealt with at that time under the Defence of India Act; and the PD Act was an innocent measure meant only, of course, against these three categories whom he specified.

Shri Nanda went on to admit—he made a very interesting admission—and I would like to remind the hon. Minister of Shri Nanda's speech—that in a sense even the PD Act was not being used adequately against persons who by virtue of their hold over resources and commodities are able to use it for purposes contrary to the interests of society. Of course, the people who have a hold over resources and commodities—by that, he meant obviously those people who indulge in profiteering, blackmarketing or hoarding of essential commodities and so on. It is on record that Shri Nanda made this admission, though he made it very haltingly and very belatedly, under pressure from many members of this House, that he did not consider that adequate action had been taken against that particular category, and gave an assurance that in future it would be done.

Now, this is a statement, statistical data, which has been laid before us... It shows at page 3 that between the period from 1 October, 1965 and 30 September 1966, this year, the overwhelming majority of people detained under this PD Act have been detained actually under clause 3(I) (a) (ii) which means "on grounds of security of the State and maintenance of public order." 676 people are in detention on the 30th September, 1966 under this particular

section of the Act. Here, the activities for which these people have been detained are not specified in details except for two broad categories, which are also very interesting. One category refers to violent activities and another one is referred to as *goondaism*. Of course, this metaphysical difference or distinction which is made here had better be explained by the Government, because, as Shri Masani pointed out, what is meant by *goondaism* is the normal activity of a professional *goonda*. We do not know why the PD Act should be used in this case and not the normal law of the land. By violent activities we know this omnibus clause, this omnibus phrase, which is used to describe all those people who are arrested and are detained in connection with the big mass movements on popular issues; the agitations which are at present sweeping this country from end to end, whether they be on the issue of food or on the issue of high prices or on the issue of a steel plant in Andhra Pradesh or any such other issue, or even the agitation that has taken place the other day on the issue of the ban on cow-slaughter. It was a mass movement, whether one agrees with it or not. I do not agree with it at all, but masses of people were brought and they participated in that movement.

I am just going to show that, though I am against Preventive Detention under any circumstances, because there are enough weapons in the armoury of the Government under the normal law of the land, even then I will show that even within the provisions of this Act, how do the Government practice this discrimination. Apparently they do not mind a particular type of violence. It is only another type of violence to which they object. All this moral talk about violence and non-violence is just a lot of humbug. It is only a particular type of violence which seems to excite them and worry them. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, when he first brought forward this Bill for the first time in 1950, spoke about sleepless nights which it caused him, to think that they were going to enact, incorporate this principle of detention without trial. Unfortunately now, sleepless nights are being caused to these gentlemen on the opposite side not by any considerations of this Bill; sleepless nights are being caused by the fact that millions of people all over the country are revolting against their policies. And huge agitations and struggles are taking place and they cannot be suppressed; it has been proved that they cannot be suppressed even by the most ruthless use of police violence by shooting down people or imprisoning them. But why do they make this distinction on the basis of their own principle?

There is the talk about people who foment communal violence. So many times in the past, Shri Nanda talked about it here. "When there are people here preaching communal violence, should we not have such a weapon in our hands to deal with them"? I leave it to this House to judge who is preaching the communal violence. We have recently seen examples of it. But the PD Act was not used. I am not saying that the PD Act should have been

used. But why is it used in other cases and not used here? People were arrested under the law of the land in this country; the relevant sections of the Criminal Procedure Code were used against them. The PD Act was not used.

In my own constituency, last week, the hon. Home Minister surely knows it—in a localised pocket, a very unfortunate communal riot took place, where at least several hundred homes of people belonging to the minority community have been burnt and looted and pillaged. But I know; I went round that place for four days, day and night in that area. Some arrests were made, quite a large number, but a lot of people who are certainly not very desirable people and were pursuing these activities even in broad day-light were certainly not arrested under the PD Act. The PD Act was not called into play against them. What is the principle on which they proceed, I cannot follow.

We find under the broad heading "Violent activities" 676 people have been detained of whom the majority are in Bihar, U.P. and West Bengal. They have all been arrested in connection with the recent agitation about food and high prices. There is a column here which says "political affiliations, if know, of the persons detained". Every time studiously this column is left blank, so that no clue is available whether these people are not *goondas* or professional criminals, but people participating in these mass movements which are actually the creation of the ruling party. So long as they continue on this present path of allowing the food crisis to grow from bad to worse, so long as they allow the profiteers and hoarders to create this agony of high prices, so long as they persist in this policy which led to devaluation and which has created a worse economic situation and all this havoc in the country, how can they prevent these mass movements? They have allowed the police to commit excesses even within the precincts of educational institutions. They themselves have created this Frankenstein monster, which they are shouting about now. They do not wish to say what the political affiliations of the detenus are, because by labelling them as people guilty of violent activities, they want people to believe that they are also some sort of *goondas* or criminals. Why not fill up this column also? Then it would be clear that these are people with certain political views and affiliations, against whom action has been taken by the Government to suppress these popular demonstrations.

The number of people under detention under clause 3(1) (a) (iii) which refers to "maintenance of supplies and services", *i.e.* where action is contemplated against profiteers, hoarders and that kind of people who, Nandaji admitted, were not proceeded against sufficiently, is miserably small. Just 50 or 60 people have been detained under this head over the whole country. We find that no action worth talking about is taken. So, even within the framework of their own protestations and their own aims and objectives of the Act as declared by them, they practice a certain discrimination, which

is evidently political in motive. It has political aims behind it. Therefore, it is quite clear that despite all the provisions which exist under the Cr. P.C., they are bent upon keeping this really emergent type of legislation on the anvil for the simple purpose of suppressing popular movements, which they know are growing in intensity from day-to-day.

There is the economic crisis which, I think every thinking person on the ministerial benches would admit privately, if not publicly, is the root cause of all the popular discontent and disaffection which is growing in the country. Do they really think it can be put down by virtue of measures like the PD Act? It cannot be put down. They are incapable and unwilling to tackle the basic causes. They are not capable of going to the root of the problem because that would mean giving up their present policies and taking to an entirely new set of policies which would be in the interests of the people, but not in the interests of the handful of exploiters, who are allowed to profit entirely from this economy. If the masses find that their conditions of living go on deteriorating while those 70 or 75 monopoly houses listed in the Monopoly Enquiry Commissions Report go on prospering from day-to-day, if the share of the national income and national wealth which is being created by the labour of millions which falls to the lot of the common man goes on shrinking and if the distribution of wealth becomes more and more inequitable, how can they prevent these huge mass movements and resistance to these policies? It cannot be prevented.

This Act has been foisted on this House and on this country, not once but 5 or 6 times in the name of temporary extention, all the time pretending that it is not to be a permanent measure. But each time we find that they come forward to keep it permanent in their armoury, now all the more so, because public opinion and international opinion will not tolerate any further the use of the DIR in the way it has been used since 1962. Therefore, the PD Act is their last hope in order to fill the gap and they go on using it without the fear of having to appear before any court and prove any charges for convicting any person.

Shri Masani quoted a lot of instances from so many countries which are democratic, according to his choice. Even in the USA, I read in the papers that referring to the anti-Vietnam war demonstrations which are taking place there, somebody asked a spokesman of the State Department, "Can't you take any firmer measures to deal with these dissentors?" as he called them. The spokesman replied, "Yes, of course we can. If we were to declare a state of emergency, as we are permitted to do under our Constitution, we can take firmer measures. But we do not want to do that because it would have profound political repercussions here and abroad." Even in the USA, where they are in the middle of a full-scale aggressive war against an Asian country

employing lakhs of regular military personnel, they hesitate ten times before resorting to any such thing as an emergency measure like that in order to suppress a dissenting opinion. But in our country they do not seem to bother at all.

As more and more the interests of the ruling party get identified with the interests of certain big money bags in our country, in order to suppress the mass revolt against the policies of exploitation and profiteering, it is inevitable that the ruling party, in order to serve the interests of these big moneybags, will have to resort to this kind of lawless law.... Should not this Act be used ... against people who jeopardise the security of the country by swindling foreign exchange....?

*** *** ***

Sir, on behalf of our party, we oppose this Bill lock, stock and barrel. We consider it to be a total disgrace and I am sorry the new Home Minister should follow in the same tradition of his predecessors.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, at 12.30 last night, immediately after the declaration of emergency but before the Defence of India Bill had been passed, a leading member of our party in Delhi, a member of the Delhi State Council of the Communist Party of India, Shri Ved Prakash, was arrested from his house at 12.30 last night. Shri Ved Prakash, I admit, is a thorn in the flesh of the local police for a long time, not only today. He has always been the champion of the locality's people against all types of police harassment, extortion, etc. And no sooner had the emergency been declared, while the Capital city was still lying under a black-out, while Pakistani planes were still raiding our air-fields, the first thing that the Delhi police could think of doing in this Kotla Mubarakpur area, was to go at 12.30 at night and arrest our comrade, Shri Ved Prakash. Later on they will say that he was some anti-social element or something like that; we know the ways of the police.

I am constrained to mention this case because I along with lakhs of people in this country had shared the serious misgivings about the way in which the Defence of India Act and the rules are likely to be implemented, because this is not something that we are talking about vaguely. We have concrete experience of it.

Last time Emergency was declared in 1962; it was not withdrawn till 1968. For six years it remained in force as well as the Defence of India Act and the rules. We cannot forget that. There was no war after 1965; but the emergency was not withdrawn. Between 1963 and 1965 also there was no war but the emergency was not revoked and during that period there were serious misuses and abuses of those powers by the administration, particularly by the police administration.

What is written here can be argued to be very necessary as emergency powers. But the thing we want to bring to the notice of the Government is that we are not at all reassured by anything that has happened so far that similar misuses and abuses will not take place. Shri Pant** may give here all sorts of assurances but Shri Pant is not personally responsible for administering this Act and rules in various parts of the country. We know very well what

*Participating in a discussion on the Defence of India Bill, 1971; *L.S. Deb.*, 4 December 1971.
**Referring to Shri K.C. Pant, the then Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

the administration at the lower levels is like and how they use this to pay off old scores against people whom they do not like and how unscrupulous elements at the level of villages and towns and so on deliberately try to get certain innocent people framed. Such things have happened on a big scale last time. I would warn the Government that if they allow similar things to happen again, it will be very bad for the morale and the unity of our people which should be the paramount consideration at this time.

There are explicit provisions here for the punishment of people who indulge in profiteering, hoarding, black-marketing and adulteration or in other unfair practices in relation to goods procured by or supplied to the Government and so on. But our experience is that these powers were hardly ever used or used in a very fractional, marginal and superficial way, sometimes when there was some pubic outcry in some particular place. Otherwise these provisions were never used. But the provisions were used in the name of suppressing people who are supposed to be anti-social or pro-Pakistanis and so on, against hundreds and thousands of people who were perfectly innocent.

We have referred on previous occasions in this House to the persecution which took place, particularly of the minority community, I can speak from first hand experience, of at least West Bengal where several thousands of ordinary people belonging to the Muslim community were indiscriminately arrested and detained without any chance of proving anything or disproving anything because that provision is not there. Later on when hostilities with Pakistan were over they had to be released and they were taken by everybody to have been perfectly innocent. People in various localities who were communal elements went and gave false reports to the police saying that somebody was sitting in his house and listening to the Pakistan radio and therefore he should be arrested or that somebody else was flashing a torch in the night which was to say that he was signalling with an ever-ready torch to the Pakistani Sabre jets! Therefore, he should be locked up. On such false and flimsy grounds a lot of people were persecuted unnecessarily.

I do not say for a minute that any person who is actually engaged in anti-national work and who is acting as a spy or Pakistani agent and indulges in sabotage or leaks out secrets should not be proceeded against. He must be proceeded against, and he will not necessarily always be a member of the minority community. Such people are found in other communities also, including the majority community, we know it.

What is going to be the safeguard? Or, is it the Government's contention that at a time of crisis like this many innocent people must necessarily suffer. I do not subscribe to this philosophy. Other countries have also fought wars, and we do not find this kind of thing taking place there.

Secondly, because an Emergency sometimes becomes in the hands of the Government a sort of permanent feature which they would like to keep in force indefinitely, a lot of evils flow from that. For example, we have told you in this House today, other colleagues have also stated, categorically and unconditionally that the workers manning our factories and production units are prepared today in this hour of crisis to give their utmost to the cause of national defence and they will make sacrifices for that, but what happened last time? Working hours were increased, holidays were reduced. That was all right so long as hostilities were going on, but in the name of the Emergency, for year after that, when there was no hostility, these extra hours, reduction of holidays and compulsory deductions in the name of the war fund went on continuing for months and years. They have left a very bad taste in the mouth of many people. So, I am pleading for safeguards against misuse and abuse of these powers. There are no safeguards here.

As a matter of fact, the new section 17A which provides that a person may be detained without obtaining the opinion of the Advisory Board for a period longer than three months, but not exceeding two years from the date of his detention, has been made even more stringent than before. He can be kept in detention for a period of two years without his case being put up for review by the Advisory Board. This is an obnoxious thing. Nobody is saying he should be released if he has done some thing, but when he is detained without trial, without any charge, without any proceedings, without any chance to prove or disprove anything, should not his case be put up before the Advisory Board which the Government constitutes? It is a monstrous thing, innocent people can be put to such suffering and victimisation that it cannot be tolerated.

As I have said earlier, nothing was done, or very little was done, about these blackmarketeers and profiteers and speculators who I think are the best allies of Pakistan today; the people who help disrupt the rear while our front is attacked by armour and planes, are the profiteers, speculators and blackmarketeers. Will the Minister give us a firm assurance that the powers under this Bill will be unhesitatingly and energetically used against such people who are disrupting the economy today and putting our people to unnecessary privation? Nothing was done last time.

We are all anxious that the total material resources of our country should be harnessed today for the single cause of national defence. Every member in this House who is connected in any way with the labour movement knows very well what has been going on in the last few years when certain employers, for purposes of their own, have been recklessly closing down units without adequate cause, trying to put the blame on somebody else. Some of them have genuine causes, that they did not get adequate orders or raw materials

and so on, but a large number of the bigger units have been closed down for other purposes. While units are allowed to be closed, only workers are asked to increase production. Workers will, of course, increase production. But what about those gentlemen who are keeping the units deliberately closed? The first thing by which the Government's sincerity will be tested is this: they can certainly use these powers to see that these factories are opened. They are mainly in the engineering, textile and chemical industries, all of which have got some direct or indirect bearing on the war effort. They cannot be allowed to be closed at the whim of the employer. So, Government should take early steps to see through some sort of discussions which can be arranged that in future no employer will arbitrarily close down any unit or unilaterally retrench any worker during this period of crisis. Otherwise, it is all moonshine to talk about harnessing production for the war effort. A large number of people have been victimised. Victimisation cases are pending. If you want to harness the enthusiasm of the working class, it is necessary to review all these cases, whether in the private sector or public sector, withdraw them and allow everybody to work.

I would suggest for Shri Pant's consideration that this time at least, for the implementation of the Defence of India Act and the rules to be framed thereunder, a sort of supervisory committee should be set up, consisting of non-officials—representatives of various parties at least which are represented in this House. It should be called from time to time or when any member or members of that committee have got any grievances regarding the way this is operated in any particular place or sector, the committee should meet and review the actual progress of the implementation. When concrete instances of misuse or abuse are brought to the notice of the Government, that committee must be permitted to look into them. Otherwise, this business of taking everybody into confidence and wanting all of us to become partners in this effort does not have much meaning, because everything now comes under the umbrella of the Defence of India Act. Therefore, this is a thing which affects the life, liberty and properties of all the citizens and their organisations. The least that can be done is to see that that the non-official committee is given a proper status, with supervisory powers and allowed to review how this thing is actually implemented. We know how the magistrates, SDOs, and other police officers run amuck. I have an instance. Shri Ved Prakash was arrested last night in Delhi even before the Defence of India Act was promulgated because the police did not like him. He fights for the people's interests in that locality of Kotla Mobarakpur. I want Shri Pant to see that he is released. If this sort of things goes on, you will be killing the enthusiasm and morale of the people. We do not want to fight on two fronts—one against Pakistan and another against corrupt and oppressive officials, and employers who want to retrench workers and close down factories. So, it is the

responsibility of the Government not only to harness the national effort against the aggressor but also to defend the people against aggression by blackmarketeers, profiteers and corrupt officials.

I wanted to voice these serious misgivings we have got. On the face of it, one cannot oppose these powers as they are laid down on paper. But the whole trouble is with their implementation, with their misuse and abuse. Government must give us more specific and concrete assurances this time that they will see to it that these things are not done.

I would like to remind the House that we have not yet completed one year of this Government coming to office. We will be doing so shortly, and it is an irony of fate or history, I do not know what, that before even completing one year this Government is having to take resort to this law of preventive detention. They cannot carry on without it, it means that.

Of course, it is rather an edifying or undefying spectacle, I do not know which, to see champions of preventive detention past and present arguing with each other here as to whether one clause was better than or worse than the other.

*** *** ***

Whoever is in league with whichever foreign power, whichever side it may be—Shri Jethmalani was referring to foreign alliances, I do not know what foreign alliance he would like to be in, but certainly you are both vying with each other, and therefore, you were trying to bring this in the Criminal Procedure Code. The truth of the matter is that the Government has landed itself in an all-round crisis and it is not able now to rely on the whole battery of other laws and statutes that they have got, and their last resort is to bring in this preventive detention but as many friends here have reminded us, whether it was the old Preventive Detention Act on the Defence of India Act or the MISA or the present Bill, all coming under different names from time to time, every time we have been given this assurance that it will not be used against political opponents, it will not be used to suppress legitimate trade union activities etc., that it will be used, as the hon. Minister has said repeatedly, only against anti-social elements, against the enemies of the country, against *goondas* as he was saying so often. I would like to remind the House that he tried to silence Shri Banatwalla** by saying "Why are you opposing this Bill? This Bill is meant to defend the minorities."

The same thing was said here during the days of MISA. When the Bangladesh war took place, the first victims of MISA were thousands and thousands of innocent Muslims who were arrested and detained because complaints were alleged against them by interested parties that they were listening to some Pakistan radio or something else. The people settled their

*Participating in the debate on the National Security Bill, 1980; *L.S. Deb.*, 16 December 1980.
**Referring to Shri G.M. Banatwalla.

old scores like that. They had to release the whole lot of them later on. Please do not say that this Bill is being brought to defend the minorities because the situation arises when it becomes a weapon against the minorities, and not to defend them.

I would like to remind you also that I have been a victim of the old Preventive Detention Act. The first time I was detained was in 1954 because I was leading some agitation for bonus for jute mill workers in West Bengal, who upto that time had never received a single penny as bonus. I addressed a big meeting in Calcutta, I admit, of jute mill workers telling them, "If this right to bonus is not granted, you will have to prepare for a strike". After my speech, I left that meeting and, on my way home, on the road, I was followed by plain clothes policemen and I was arrested and detained for three months under the Preventive Detention Act. The grounds which were supplied to me later on said that in some secret meeting, in some place or other, I had instigated the people to use bombs and pipe guns and what not. I was released by the hon. High Court of Calcutta on a *habeas corpus* petition after three months.

The second time I was detained under the Preventive Detention Act was in 1959 at the time of a big agitation for food in West Bengal, when hundreds of people were detained. The Government of Shri P.C. Sen was then in office—when a big demonstration of starving people from the villages was shot down and many people were detained and beaten to death in Calcutta. In the long run, it did us no harm. The very next year I was elected for the first time to this House and Shri P.C. Sen, I do not know where he is, what were the grounds given? I am saying this because every time the grounds proved that they were all an afterthought which were concocted after the person concerned had been detained and had nothing to do with what he was actually doing. Therefore, we do not attach one little grain of any kind of belief in these assurances which are given here shamelessly and which are flagrantly violated every time.

I would like to say one thing more. The Statement of Objects and Reasons in this Bill mentions things like industrial unrest, maintenance of essential supplies and services and so on. The experience has proved that it has always been used against trade unionists. It has never been used against employers who are guilty of closing down factories, declaring lockouts, declaring closures and creating industrial unrest. This has never been used against them. If you can cite a single instance, please tell us a single employer or industrialist who was arrested and detained under the Preventive Detention Act. I can give you a list of hundreds and thousands of trade unions against whom this power has been used. Shri Stephen* should know that at least.

* Referring to Shri C.M. Stephen, the then Union Minister of Communications.

The case of Shri A.K. Roy has been repeatedly raised here. No reply is given because no reply can be given. He is an elected member of this House from Bihar. I would like to correct the Home Minister because he thought that he was elected from West Bengal. He is elected from Bihar.

*** *** ***

You don't mind—a great charity on your part—to take away someone's liberty for 24 hours or 48 hours and release him. It would have been proper for the Home Minister to admit that in the case of Shri A.K. Roy, they have committed a very serious infringement of human freedom and liberty and that such a thing will not happen again. That is what he should have said. He does not utter a single word. If this can be done to a member of Parliament and he does not bother to make a single reference to that, what are we to conclude from that?

This is, therefore, a monstrous Act which will be used—I am warning the House—in the way in which it has been used in the past not for purposes which the home Minister has repeatedly emphasised here. Has he an effrontery to say that 90 per cent of the people are supporting this Bill?

It is a Government which was elected by about 48 per cent of the people. He could at least have said that 42 or 48 per cent supported this Bill. I would not have minded if he had said that. But who has given him that right to say that 90 per cent of the people support this Bill? Has he taken a referendum, has he taken the public opinion? He does not represent 90 per cent of the people. The Government has been elected by a minority vote of the people—42 or 46 per cent. And he is talking about 90 per cent. This sort of using the steam-roller to get things through should not be tolerated, and we are not going to tolerate because things are going out of hand in the country; whether prices, inflation, or unemployment—all these things. The police is not within their control any more. The police is revolting at various places. Therefore, we will oppose this Bill. At every stage, we have opposed it here. We will carry on a campaign against it outside. It is not going to bow us down because we are fighting for democratic causes and they cannot be brought within the ambit of this Bill.

ON THE PUNJAB PROBLEM*

Mr. Chairman, the President's Address by tradition and necessity, I suppose, covers a very wide field. Nevertheless, I think that is not a justification for the entirely superficial and cavalier treatment which this Address has given to the situation in Punjab. I know we have had a lengthy debate on this question during the discussion on the Adjournment Motion which was admitted. Nevertheless in the limited time at my disposal, I am constrainted to once again refer to this subject. The main reason for that is, I did not participate in that debate, but I was waiting merely along with, I suppose, several millions of our countrymen for some sort of lead to be given to the country by the Government, by the Prime Minister, on this matter. A debate can take place in which allegations and counter-allegations take place, in which excuses are given for all sorts of things and so on. But at the end of it all, in this very disturbing and very appealing situation that we are facing, one expects the Ruling Party and the Prime Minister to give some indication of what is to be done now. They are rather completely bankrupt, they have nothing to offer to the country. I am afraid, I was very much disappointed that nothing was stated here as to what the Government proposed to do now. They may not succeed, they may fail; that is a different matter. But no kind of indication whatsoever was given.

In the President's Address, out of 30 paragraphs there is one paragraph referring to the Punjab consisting of five sentences and there are two sentences about what happened in Haryana. That is all, I think that is a masterpiece of complacency and also, I should say, of callousness. I kept feeling that we are now approaching within a few days two very historic anniversaries which are connected with the blood of our people, with the Punjab. One is the 21st of March this month, the day on which Shaheed Bhagat Singh was executed. Another is in the next month, the anniversary of the Jalianwallabagh massacre. We have talked a lot about the great traditions of our country, our Independence movement and all that, of which we are all very proud. We cannot forget Sardar Bhagat Singh, whose picture hangs now probably more than anybody else's picture, in so many houses in this country and we cannot forget Jallianwala Bagh where the blood of Hindus and Sikhs and everybody followed together. On such an occasion, I think, more is expected from the

* Participating in the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address; *L.S. Deb.*, 1 March 1984.

Parliament of India than we have been able to considering the terrorist problem which we are facing now on this occasion.

The first thing, the President ought to have done in his Address was to admit, if I may humbly say so, that the rule which is going on in Punjab in his name since the month of October last has been a total failure. Last November we debated in this House the Bills which were to replace the ordinances. One was the Disturbed Areas Bill relating to Punjab and the other was the Armed Forces Special Powers Bill. At that time, during the debate some of us had warned that these measures were not going to have the slightest effect. We were attacked, of course, from that side saying we do not want law and order to be maintained. That is why, we are opposing this Bill and so on and so forth. But now, of course, I can say—I do not want to score a debating point—but the fact is that we did emphasise this point that this is a problem which has to be solved by political means and it cannot be solved by the Disturbed Areas Act and the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. Even under these Acts, the special powers that were given to police and the Army have they been used against the people who are creating this violence and terrorism there? Have they been able to use them? If they had been able to, that would have a been to their credit and they would have been able to come before this Parliament with a report and a record about it. The fact of the matter is, nothing was done and nothing can be done. And the situation has actually gone on worsening as everybody knows here. It has not improved. It is worsening in spite of all those special powers—military, police and everything.

Sir, Shri Darbara Singh was removed as Chief Minister of Punjab. He was supposed to have resigned, of course. But he was removed from the Chief Ministership. As I had said on that occasion, the President's Rule was imposed even without a proper report from the Governor. All that he forwarded to the Centre was a letter from Shri Darbara Singh. It was not the Governor's report. Any way, the purpose at that time, as I see, was only to appease the Akalis. There was a lobby which was saying, "Nobody will come for talks and nobody would negotiate so long as Darbara Singh is there; he must be removed". And our Government suffers pathetically from this delusion that if some sort of condition can be created then the so-called moderates among the Akalis will be willing to come for talks and settlement; they will have the courage to stand up to the extremists.

*** *** ***

You have a majority in the Punjab Assembly. You have a majority and you could have made somebody else as the Chief Minister and carried on. But the whole idea given, impression given, was by imposing the President's rule and giving special powers to police and military, it would be possible to

control the situation. We said, 'No'. I must point out and I hope the Prime Minister will not contest this. You see, the other day—on the 7th of last month—when she kindly called the leaders of the Opposition for a consultation, it was decided that again a tripartite meeting would be convened and they would be asked to come which would be held later on the 14th. I am sorry to say that the entire Press has been given the impression also and the Government, of course, has taken credit and kept quiet as though it was the Government which called the Opposition leaders in order to initiate the idea of having another tripartite meeting. This was not so. The hon. Prime Minister remembers that. It was not so. Please bear with me.

As a matter of fact, in that meeting—the point is, I am coming to that connection in the subsequent events. Otherwise, it does not matter much. We did not deny also that. If you want to take the credit, you take the credit. But in that meeting, all of us were pressing for resumption of the tripartite talks for the simple reason that there was no other way out to deal with this question. You may fail in the tripartite talks, once or twice or thrice, whatever it is. What else are you going to do? How else will you tackle the problem?

If I remember right, it was the Government, the Prime Minister, who were very reluctant at that time to resume the tripartite talks saying, it will not lead to any result. We have tried it before. It is no use negotiating with these people. They always come up with new demands and so on and so forth. The day the tripartite talks resumed, new and widespread disturbances were engineered outside—the whole thing collapsed in one day—and the Akalis walked out of the talks. They got a chance and they said; "We will not come back". And the trouble spread to Haryana also. I am not going into all that now as to what happened in Haryana.

The Prime Minister must tell us what the Government is thinking of doing. It is no use saying that her party is not like some other parties. She has tried to make a virtue of this indiscipline in her party saying, "We are not monolithic and we do not want to be monolithic." But you are the ruling party and you cannot boast of your lack of discipline, lack of unity and chaos inside your party. You should not try to make a virtue out of something which is dividing Congressmen from Congressmen even on communal issues depending on whether they belong to Punjab or Haryana.

*** *** ***

Earlier, I remember, a few days ago, in some other context, I think in some interview to some foreign Press also the Prime Minister was on record as saying, "We are not as disciplined as some Communist parties" and so on. Everybody says that we have to get together to fight this violence and this situation which has arisen. Before we can all get together, the Congressmen

have to get together if they want to join in this endeavour. Some forces which were anxious to sabotage any kind of a settlement saw to it that as soon as the tripartite talks resumed, there would be widespread disturbances in both the States. This itself is evidence of the fact that the people who are indulging in terrorism, violence and communal fanaticism are very much frightened about the possibility or the probability of a negotiated settlement through the tripartite talks. They do not like it at all. They do not want to take it to the negotiating table; they prefer to take it to the streets with the weapons which they have got. Precisely for this reason it is necessary for all of us who believe in secularism and in fighting this evil that we should try to see that they are forced to come to the negotiating table and hammer out the points there.

*** *** ***

I am very glad that the Prime Minister in her speech was forthright in debunking the theory which was being talked about, reaction and retaliation, that reaction and retaliation are justified and all those implications were being made here by some people. I am very glad that she has categorically rebutted that most dangerous and ill-advised line of thinking.

May I now make a few suggestions here? All these are my humble suggestions for the House to consider. We are all hanging in the air without concrete proposals at all, as to what to do.

The first point I wish to make on behalf of my party is, nobody can depend on the Police now and nobody has any faith in the Police. You know that as well as I do. Yesterday, there was disturbance during the Shiv Rathri Mela. The main anger of the people was against the Police first, for having failed to make any proper arrangements. You read it in the newspapers. It was the Police who were the object of the wrath of the people. The Police totally failed in their responsibility even on such an occasion.

Therefore, I would like to say first of all that all parties which believe in Hindu-Sikh unity and which are united in opposing violence, terrorism, etc., let them jointly set up Peace Committees in all the villages and towns of at last three districts, Amritsar, Gurudaspur and Ferozepur which are on the border. Across that border, you know what is happening on the other side and who is deriving comfort from this. We are talking everyday about this danger coming from outside. Some times the Opposition is being chided and it is said that the Opposition do not understand and do not realise the danger from outside.

If you want to combat this external danger which is also growing—we know the United States is building its base in Zia-ul-Haq's territory—then it is compulsory on all of us that we should control this situation on the border

on our side by seeing that this is not allowed to develop further and that it is stopped. We are not at all of the view that, by depending on Security forces and Police forces, this can be put down. That has been proved. It would only provoke the terrorists more and make the situation worse. Now, it is necessary that there should be mass campaigning among the people down below.

Your Party, the Congress Party, I am afraid, is not very much coming forward at all in this regard as is known apparently from all the reports we have got from Punjab.

Some Peace marches and so on have been planned and organised only three or four days ago in Ludhiana and in various towns but the Congress party is conspicuous by its absence.

We do not believe that you will be able to isolate these extremists or do anything without going to the masses and rousing them and explaining to them the issues at stake, without exposing these people who are carrying on this vicious campaign and these attacks. This must be taken up seriously. I can only make this offer that for every one peace worker or volunteer that the Congress party brings forward, my Party in Punjab will bring two people. We will bring two people for every one person that your Party may bring. But you must come forward. Let us all go there together, if necessary. Let us take part in peace marches. If we are attacked by these people, if anybody wants to fire or shoot us down, let them. We are living in the land of Bhagat Singh who was executed here in this month in 1931. We are living in the land of Jallianwala Bagh martyrs. We are living in the land of Sumit Singh. The Prime Minister said "I am surprised that he was shot and killed a few days ago because though he was a Sikh, he did not have a beard and, therefore, they killed him." That was not why they killed him. They killed plenty of people with beard also. They killed him because he was the grandson of Sardar Gurubaksh Singh, editor *'Pritlari'* and he was using his pen against these people, preaching the message of brotherhood and Hindu-Sikh unity and peace. That is why, he was killed. It is not done just because he did not have a beard. They do not bother whether one has a beard or no beard. He is a martyr. He was fighting them with his pen. So, he had to pay with his life.

My Party suggests that if you are serious about this, let us all get together. Don't go on making accusations that you are not getting the cooperation from the Opposition and this and that. Let all Parties which are willing to fight this evil, let us all get together and go to Punjab. Let us set up Peace Committees and organise volunteers in every *Mohalla* in the towns and in the villages. Let us organise Peace marches. Let us carry out a propaganda campaign among the people. Everybody here says that we congratulated the people rightly. Even now the mass of the people are not interested in having

Hindu-Sikh clashes. Their heart is sound. Their traditions are sound. Let us depend on those traditions instead of depending on Police force.

The second proposal is about Police that is there. You are not going to abolish the Police, I suppose.

The police is there; the C.R.P.F. is there and the B.S.F. is also there. But, how they are being deployed, I do not know. But, the Punjab police and the other police, the Haryana police, are all there. We know what kind of a role they have played there. I would humbly propose that these police forces must be really rigorously over-hauled. At least all the officers who are found to have been communally implicated in any of these incidents or those who have behaved like cowards or who have shirked their responsibility towards the people, strictest action must be taken against them. Whatever be your intelligence system, as far as terrorists are concerned, that intelligence system must be tightened up. It is no use saying that we do not know whether they are going to strike next because they go on motor cycle or go somehow suddenly to some place, I know it is a difficult job to be on the right spot everytime when they are operating. But, there is some failure of intelligence obviously. I do not know whether your intelligence services are also manned by reliable people or not.

My third suggestion, my final suggestion, is this. First of all, let us, for a short time, together, in this way, appeal to the Akali leaders to stop this non-sense, the burning of the Constitution and all that; let them condemn unequivocally all these violence and killings; let them condemn again publicly the use of the places of worship for harbouring the criminals and storing arms there. Let us invite them back to a tripartite conference whether they come or do not come. If they come, well and good. Even if they do not come, my party proposes that all others should meet; we should work out some just and equitable solutions which we consider to be fair and let us announce these before the country and the people that these are solutions for these problems whether it be territory or division of water or about the Gurudwara Act or whatever it is. Let us do it and let us call them. If they come, well and good and, if they do not come, may I know what you propose to do? How long can we go on like this? Every moment of drift is making the situation ten times more dangerous, making it much worse. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I must say that nobody has been trying to get down to brass-tacks and tell us concretely what are the steps which can be and should be taken now. On behalf of my party, I am making these proposals—they may not be exhaustive because there may be many things which require to be done. The television and radio can play a big part. They should have a number of programmes which should highlight the traditions of Hindu-Sikh unity which should preach the gospel of brotherliness, peace and all that much more than what

is being done. They should use some of the old traditions, the old writings and the old message which they have preached in the Punjab or in other parts of the country, that should be put across through the T.V. and Radio incessantly throughout the country. There are many other things which can be done.

I would like the Prime Minister to give some hope to the country that we are not just drifting along. That we have been overwhelmed by the events of the last few days and since the Akalis have chosen to walk out, they have nothing further to add now. I think this kind of thing will create an atmosphere of great depression and demoralisation in the country and will encourage those people who are out to create violence and trouble and disunity.

Therefore, this matter is too big to go into—these party allegations and counter-allegations. If you had that kind of security force on which you can depend, it would have been a different matter. We have not got it. If you depend upon ourselves, on the strength of the people, on the unity of the people, our combined efforts should be to mobilise the people to fight against this evil. No amount of speeches or statements are going to suffice. Let us go—we are prepared to go—and let the leaders of parties go together there; let us go and mobilise our own cadres and workers first. Let us be with them; let us form those Committees; let us take out peace marches, let us carry this message from village to village; and then only you will be able to isolate these people who are spreading all wrong rumours and ideas among the people. These are our suggestions in respect of Punjab and due to lack of time it is not possible for me to discuss on economic aspects. The same will be done later but at the moment this is the main problem and the main issue and a challenge before the country and I hope the Government will give some hope to the country that they are thinking of something concrete.

There is Home Minister's Motion asking for approval of further extension for six months of President's rule in Punjab and along with it the speech that he made when introducing that Motion. In my opinion it amounts to an expression of complete frustration with the whole situation. They are in a blind alley. They do not know what to do. All he has said is that the Governor has given a report or recommendation that the situation is not ripe for restoration of popular or democratic rule; that any such Government if attempted to be formed now would lead to some kind of loosening of the strict measures which have been taken and there will be a general weakening of the situation and also no party or parties which includes, of course, the Congress Party also are in a position to offer any kind of stable or effective Government and therefore the President's rule must continue. This is the argument of the Governor as reported to us by the Home Minister which has been buttressed by him claiming that on the law and order front things are very much better now, improved, people's confidence has grown and he has used this expression. I am quoting from him—

> "That the terrorists are in hiding and virtually on the run".
>
> I think a more bogus claim can hardly be thought of. This claim is made on the very day when four Police officers were killed in one day, including one D.S.P. That was the day when the Home Minister was saying in the House.
>
> "That the terrorists are in hiding and on the run."

The figure he has also given that from 12 May to 21 October, the terrorists had killed 446 people of whom, perhaps, I do not know, but perhaps the majority or at least a very substantial number were Sikhs; they killed 446 people and 49 policemen; whereas the Security Forces had arrested 1935 people and had shot 197 terrorists. Now if these figures are compared with the figures of the previous period just before President's rule was imposed when the Barnala Government was functioning there, we find that the number of killings has, therefore, increased. It has not gone down. It has increased.

---

* Participating in discussion on the Statutory Resolution regarding the President's Proclamation on Punjab; *L.S. Deb.*, 9 November 1987.

It is on the basis of the Government's own figures and during this period we have also seen some, what one might say is, evidences of the terrorists being very much organised and active, far from being subdued. We have seen killings of Shri Buta Singh's own relatives in his village on the occasion of a family marriage or something like that. It is a sad thing. But in a village where Home Minister has directly got his own links and connections and relatives, such a thing did take place. Many other killings took place during this period of killings of entire families. I know because our party had some victims among them, where the entire family was wiped out. We have also in this period seen the audacity of these terrorists that they have carried out this massacre in Delhi in Chittaranjan Colony. He has made no reference to these things. He said "that the terrorists are on the run". Such a ghastly massacre took place here. Earlier also we have had the killings in Greater Kailash and all that and now in the Chittaranjan Colony. I hope he does not want to draw a kind of dividing line between those terrorists and these terrorists. It is a part of organised plan to create a certain atmosphere and condition of panic and also to give an impression of being capable of taking so called retaliatory action. It is true. I admit because I frequently do have to go to Punjab and I also may say that on my recent visit I had to go to particularly village areas where our people have been killed and which are quite notorious, hot-beds of the terrorists. It is true. As the Home Minister said, that in general the ordinary people, Hindus, of course the Sikhs also, are much more opposed to terrorism and the terrorist activities than they were before. That is the fact. It is also a fact that what is dominant is fear and panic; fear has also grown. It is wrong to say that the confidence on the security forces has grown among the ordinary people. It is not so. In many places, Sir, I was told by the people themselves that the whole trouble is that at night these security forces do not want to move out from their posts. If some alarm is given, if some news comes up about the attempt by the terrorists some where, there is a great reluctance on the part of the security forces to leave their posts at night and to move out. One reason for that may be that the C.R.P.F. or any other Central Forces which are deployed are strangers to the area. They do not know the area, they do not know the villages, they do not know the people and they can't identify anybody. They have to rely entirely on the local, that is, the Punjab Police, and whatever intelligence they claim to have and therefore much of their effectiveness has also been blunged in spite of the fact that they have been deployed in fairly substantial numbers because the terrorists are mainly acting at night and people everywhere complain that at night these people are not to be seen or heard. They don't come out and they don't arrive at the place till several hours after the killings and incidents took place. I must say one thing that the weakest part of the Home Minister's argument was to explain why it was necessary in the first place to impose President's rule. His only argument is that under the Barnala

Government the law and order situation was deteriorating and killings were going up and the situation had gone worse after the imposition of the President's rule. The real reason, the political motivation, I will say, of the Centre, behind the imposition of the President's rule, has not been mentioned by the Home Minister at all. The political motivation at that time was that such a move would help the ruling party to mobilise Hindu votes in the Haryana election. That was the whole idea to give the Hindus in Haryana a feeling that the Centre is bothered about them and therefore they are going to come down with a heavy hand on the terrorists in Punjab. But that gamble also failed. They did not get many votes. They got the worst drubbing they ever had in their life in the Haryana election.

Now, what is the essential flaw that we find in this whole argument? Just on the eve of the President's rule, this political mobilisation attempt had started. You remember, there was a move which was initiated from Delhi. All the secular parties, took part in it and it was decided that there would be an-all-party campaign in the Punjab for joint mobilisation which we believe is the only way by which the terrorists can be effectively isolated from the mass of people. At present it is wrong to think that they are isolated. People are afraid of them. People don't like many things they are doing. But they are not isolated. In fact, I know that in parts of Amritsar district, they have been able to expand their base in the rural areas. They are able to move about freely in the day time also. People who are known as terrorists are seen going around in the day time but nobody has courage to do anything or say anything to them. They are given shelter or possibly they take shelter in village houses. They get food from there and all that. So, they are not isolated and they will not be isolated unless the political mobilisation of the people, that means making the people themselves come out and be vocal, speak out which they are afraid to do and people without arms are facing all these sophisticated weapons. But that political mobilisation effort which was made and which I think, as long as it continued, was having positive results. Very big rallies and meetings were being held and the majority of the people who were coming to these rallies were Sikhs. They were sitting there. They were supporting what was being said, for the need for a popular resistance against the Khalistan movement. But the whole thing has been stopped now. The moment President's rule was imposed, after that the whole thing has been stopped. No more move jointly by all the parties together. Whoever wants to do something on his own separately is free to do it and get killed in the bargain. I do not see why we of the Left should have a monopoly or should take up a contract to go on shedding our blood for what purpose? Unless everybody comes together and if this is considered to be a national task, then it must be made as a joint effort. However, that was not done and one reason, Sir, I may point out as to why people cannot be mobilised in the Punjab to

come out on the streets to come out in demonstration and meetings against the terrorists is that however much they may be against the terrorists they are also against the Central Government. The sentiments of the people against the Centre, you should try to understand, are so bitter that while they do not want this terrorism to continue, it has disrupted their lives completely, dislocated their normal life and so on, at the same time they are so bitter for a number of reasons against the Centre. The result is that this mobilisation is paralysed. What are the issues on which they are bitter? They have said here in this House many times, even some assurances were given, which have not been kept up. An assurance was given in this House itself that the cases of those Jodhpur detenues would be reviewed. The Government did not say they would release all of them, but they did say that the cases would be reviewed, which means that there is a basis for review. The Government cannot say the opposite also that all the people who were found inside the Golden Temple on that day are all criminals or terrorists or people who have committed some crimes about whom they said there could be no question of a review. Why have they said that the cases would be reviewed? We know among them there are women, there are children, there are Sevadars who were there doing their duty in that temple, and so many other people, and there may be many terrorists also. I do not say there are no terrorists among them. But all that was promised he was that a review would be made in every case and those people who are found not to be involved directly in any type of serious crimes like this would be released. What has happened? We don't hear anything more about it. And if I feel bitter about this, I can understand how an ordinary sikh in the Punjab feels about these things. I would like to know what is the Government's thinking on this question now. When people talk about the emotions or the psyche of the Sikhs being hurt and all that, I don't believe in all this Khalistan business being a very big issue with them. It is these things which are acting as big pin-pricks. There is this question of taking action against at least those people who are responsible directly for these anti-sikh riots here, outside the Punjab, after Indira Gandhi's assassination. The report has come of an inquiry; that inquiry report does not specify anybody. It says, "What happened was a spontaneous thing". It is just a spontaneous expression of people's anger, whereas there is so much corroborative evidence to show that many people were directly involved in organising these attacks on the Sikhs. And then the victims of those riots, a large number are here in Delhi. Can the Government say that they have been properly rehabilitated? They are not. All these things are rankling the minds of ordinary Sikhs. These are the things which provide ammunition to the terrorists, these are the things that terrorists are able to utilise in order to get the sympathy of the people and to rouse them against the Central Government, these acts of omission and commission.

Then there is always this allegation going on that innocent Sikh youth are being tortured or they are being even killed in so called false encounters. Now, what is the Government's response? The Government says, 'No, there is no such thing.' Then why it is being said every day that false encounters and killing of innocent youth are going on, which may be partly true and partly untrue or exaggerated? And on the other side, the Government says, 'No, there is no such thing.' Everybody, every single person who is arrested or interrogated or killed is a genuine terrorist. I do not think this will satisfy anybody, it being the psychology of the Sikhs in the Punjab at this moment. Something must be done, some process must be set in motion, some method must be found by which all allegations which are based on some kind of *prima facie* evidence of people having been tourtured in the name of interrogation or are being killed by the police in order to show that they have encounters, are answered. There must be some proper inquiry. I read the speech that Shri Ribeiro* made in some village meeting in Jalandhar district I think in which—I was very glad because Ribeiro was saying this—he said, 'I cannot claim that my force is completely, 100 per cent blameless in all cases. It may be somewhere such things do happen. Some things are done which should not be done. Some excesses may be committed, but if you people who are here listening to me, bring such specific cases to my notice, I promise you as the Chief of the Police Forces here that every case will be thoroughly interrogated, by the people on whom you can depend.' But I do not know if such things are actually being done. Then we should be told something about it and the Government should come out with some kind of report instead of simply, flatly denying everything and saying, 'No, nothing like this has happened.' And the opposite side goes on saying, 'Yes, you are killing all our innocent youth.' Just now the same thing has started being said in Sri Lanka that all the innocent youth are being killed by the Indian Peace Keeping Force. This is not the way to deal with these things, Sir So, what I want to say is that the situation is serious. There should not be a complacent attitude about the law and order situation, as the Home Ministry has tried to say, because the path of joint mobilisation of all secular forces which is the only way to isolate these terrorists, has been given up virtually though the Home Minister said last time, in the last Session, that we believe firmly in that path and we are going to see that that path is followed. 'But nothing has happened. Secondly, what happened to the question of encouraging and helping and arming by people's self-defence squads in the villages who are to be given the responsibility of defending their own villages? Now, you will say some thing, yes, some squads have been formed with ex-servicemen and all that.' I go about in the punjab quite a bit, my Party is quite active. I suppose, in the Punjab, everybody knows it, and they have

*Referring to J.F. Ribeiro, the then Director General of Punjab Police.

repeatedly been requesting that such squads should be formed at least in those 3-4 districts where the terrorists are on the rampage and let the people themselves take the responsibility of guarding their areas and their villages, provided they are given some minimum arms by the Government. I suppose there is some controversy about this within the ruling circles as to whether people should be given arms; specially if they are Communists, they should not be given, better they should be killed. I do not know what they think, but I know that there is a meagre and very miserable quantity of arms and that also arms of a particular type which are of this restricted bore and all that, even that is something, but there is a very very meagre amount being given to people who are willing to come out and fight these people and stand up to that.

There are so many little things. I do not know if the Home Minister knows that when an employee of the Central Government working in the Punjab, he probably is a Punjabi himself, but he is an employee of the Central Government, Railway employee for example—when they are killed by terrorists, there is no prescribed scale or policy or anything of giving them compensation. They don't even get the compensation which an ordinary citizen in the Punjab who is a victim of the terrorists gets or which the Punjab Government gives to its own employees who are made victims. I have got a concrete case here, I can give you, of a railway employee who was killed by the terrorists. The Punjab Government referred it to the local railway authority saying, 'what about paying adequate compensation?' They said, 'we referred it to the railway authorities in Delhi, but they say, 'we have no policy, we have no prescribed norms or anything of giving compensation'. So, he has to be given less compensation than what Punjab Government employees or ordinary citizens get. These things should be looked into, who is to look into these things? I know Shri Surjit Singh Barnala on any count was quite a weak figure, he was weak on many factors. But with all my friendship and long old friendship for Siddhartha Shankar Ray.* I don't think he is a substitute for Barnala. He can't be a substitute in the Punjab for Barnala. He is not looked upon like that by ordinary Sikh people, they regard him as a symbol of the Centre against whom they have so many grievances. And those grievances also are not being attended to. So, as Prof. Dandavate** has said, is it a political question of fighting these terrorists or is it simply a question of letting the security forces handle the situation which is absurd. Both things are required. Security forces would be more effective if they were backed up by these self-defence squads in the rural areas. That also is not there. Intelligence service does not seem to have improved. Otherwise, how they went and butchered so many people of the Home Minister's family, in his

* Referring to Siddhartha Shankar Ray, the then Governor of Punjab.

**Referring to Shri Madhu Dandavate, MP

own village there? It is well-planned and well-organised thing. And just to show that they are not on the run, they come to Delhi and kill so many people in the Chittaranjan Park Colony in this very period. So, you must have a combination of effective security measures to the extent possible with political initiative. Political initiative part of it is completely missing for the last several months. Nothing is being done in that direction by the Centre nor is any move made jointly to mobilise everybody together. If you simply extend the President's rule for six months more and continue everything else in the old way, this is not going to solve anything. It will make the terrorists also more desperate and then it will also alienate the ordinary Sikh people further.

What is the role of the Gurudwaras now? He should tell us. It is because, now it has become a kind of unwritten thing that we cannot go into the Gurudwaras. We go into the complex all around the Gurudwara, into this Serai and that Serai and all that. But we cannot send the security forces into the Gurudwara proper for obvious reasons. Once that lesson has been learnt. May be we made a mistake or whatever it was. But that had the biggest repercussion on the psychology of the Sikhs. We know it very well. Now I am told that in every district, in every village, new Gurudwaras are being constructed because it is the obvious place where these people can gather, make that their headquarters. It is a kind of sanctuary, where they know, they are safe. Nobody can come inside and take action against them. They can even collect arms inside there. Those new High Priests in Amritsar who are the nominees of the terrorists have openly declared that henceforth, all the monies, contributions which are received, whether from different parts of the country or from abroad, for the Golden Temple, will be utilised for the purchase of weapons, for buying more arms, for our young men. So, where do we go from here?

Therefore, in conclusion. I would say, we do not like to support this motion because it does not offer any real alternative. It is just a frustrated way of saying, "Let us go on in the same old way". May be, you cannot find any Party just now, including your own, of course, which is capable of giving firm leadership, as you said to some new popular Government. But the president's rule is not a substitute. The role of the bureaucracy and the role of the gun is not an indefinite substitute for popular rule. It cannot be. And the Barnala Government was, no doubt, riddle by many weaknesses and contradictions and differences within the Akali Party also—we know them—which had the very negative effect on the security. We know that. But the dismissal of that Barnala Government has failed to improve matters. My point is, it has failed to improve matters. Even the movement of the terrorists across the border and the supply of arms across the border has not been plugged.

Every day, the actions against the terrorists or the actions by the terrorists, show, according to the Press, that the number of AK-47 assault rifle's is increasing, Every day this comes in the news that so many AK-47 assault rifles have been seized by the police; this was done and that was done. Where are they coming from? If you have sealed the border, where are they coming from? I do not see what great benefit to the law and order situation has been brought about by this President's rule. Even Prime Minister Junejo* is now trying his own game to capitalise on the fact which, according to them, we have been doing the same thing with the Tamil terrorists as they are doing with all Punjab terrorists. So why do you complain? He started saying openly.

You have to reply to these things. You cannot just keep quiet and say every day that our police are very active and efficient.

Finally, I will just say that some process of moving towards restoration of popular rule at least must be started, must be initiated, by the Government. The first step, I will say—because the Home Minister said who is there to talk to, nobody to talk to, nobody left to talk to—in view of this critical situation we are facing, that the Government should state openly that. "We are prepared to talk to anybody who is prepared to declare publicly that he is against secessionism, they are for national unity, they are against Khalistan, they are against terrorism." We do not ask for any other conditions in this situation. You should have no hesitation in talking to anybody who is willing to commit himself publicly before the country and the people on these issues, if it is going to be some use in finding a way out, some kind of coalition of forces, perhaps, which is capable of replacing this President's rule. I do not mind if they are inside jail now or outside jail, wherever they may be, but they have got to commit themselves on this basic point. On this, there can be no compromise. You should have no hesitation in agreeing to talk to anybody who is willing to do that. Let us do something. I do not know if you are having some secret talks, confidential talks. I do not expect you will tell us that. We are hearing something now and again from here and there. But this situation cannot be allowed to continue like this because the whole security and interest of the country is at stake and, therefore, I think this is a barren proposition simply to extend President's rule without thinking of any new step, any new initiative, nothing, go on in the old way, that will only lead us to a dead end and, therefore, we are not in favour of this type of motion which he has moved here.

---

*Referring to Muhammad Khan Junejo, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you will excuse me and the Hon. Minister will excuse me if I do not confine my remarks to either supporting or opposing these specific measures because these are measures which are meant to maintain, if I may say so, the *status quo* as it has been in force for the last several months. One is the continuance of President's rule and the other is the extention of the period for the National Security Act and so on.

Now, I was hoping that the Hon. Minister** would take the House into confidence as to what other political measures are under consideration so that this *status quo*—I do not mean the *status quo* in respect of these legislative or administrative measures but general *status quo* that is there now in the form of a deadlock in Punjab— is considered from the point of view of being resolved. I am not bothered about the public postures and the continual somersault sometimes that some of these leaders are indulging in. Nobody holds a brief for that and nobody has said at least in this House from any side that the so-called demands or pre-conditions being put forward should be accepted. I was very sorry to read in today's papers some fresh resolutions which have been adopted by the meeting of the Shrimoni Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee. The majority of them have expressed confidence in the leadership of Longowal.*** That is all right. But, attached to that, were certain pre-conditions all over again. There are some things which of course nobody, no citizen, no patriotic minded secular citizen can ever accept. I am sorry to say this. I do not know if the Press reports are correct. They have gone to the extent of saying that the jawans who risked their lives during operation Blue Star should be considered as traitors whereas the Army deserters should be considered as heroes. This kind of position cannot be accepted by anybody. I have had occasion previously in this House to say. Well, the Government took a political decision to send the Armed Forces into Golden Temple. That was the decision of the Government. It was not the decision of the jawans. The jawans were asked to carry out certain orders

* Taking part in discussion on the Resolution regarding continuance of the presidential Proclamation in respect of Punjab; The National Security (Amendment) Bill, 1985-86; Punjab Budget 1985-86; Demands for Grants on Account (Punjab); Supplementary Demands for Grants (1984-85) (Punjab); *L.S. Deb.*, 26 March 1985.

** Referring to Shri S.B. Chavan, the then Minister of Home Affairs.

*** Referring to Sant Harchand Singh Longowal.

under circumstances which, in my opinion, perhaps no other Army in the world could have carried out. And they did their job in a way which I think deserves admiration and respect from everybody. But of course I think it would have been hundred times better if such a situation had not developed and it had not become essential to send the Armed Forces into a place of worship. However it is no use going into what is past history. What has happened has happened; we cannot undo those things. This is a religious-minded country with so many religions being practised here; and if the people, not only the Sikhs, but any other community, the Hindus, or Muslims or Christians or any body at any time feel that their place of worship has been desecrated by the entry of Army into a temple or a mosque or a church, I have no doubt in my mind that the community will react in the same way perhaps as the Sikhs are doing now. It is a different matter. But the Government should take the House into confidence, should take the Opposition into confidence, as was being done at one stage before Operation Blue Star so that collectively we can put our heads together and try to think of some way. It is a very difficult task. I do not doubt it. Somebody can catalogue all the difficulties that have now accumulated over so many months. But after all this process which is there in the punjab, what is the state of affairs which exists there, both the psychological condition as far as the majority of the Sikhs are concerned, as well as the conditions of law and order? We have just seen in Chandigarh. Sir, that killings have taken place. Perhaps there is motive behind it also because in the past we have seen that whenever there is any talk of any kind of any settlement or any proposal put forward or any kind of settlement the interested sections resort to terrorist methods, like killing and murder, in order to vitiate the atmosphere again. This may be an example of that. But, Sir, the Government owes it to the country because this is a sensitive border State. We are talking every day about the threat which is coming from across the border particularly because of the tremendous accumulation of offensive weapons in Pakistan in the hands of the military regime. Amritsar for example is situated 20 miles from the border of Pakistan. And, can we afford to let a border State which has always been in the past the primary bulwark of our defence whenever there has been aggression or attack,—can we allow a State like that—to remain in this condition? This is not something which is only concerning the Punjab or the Sikhs. It is a matter of the security and the defence of the entire country. And longer the things are allowed to drift, the longer this situation is prepetuated in the Punjab, the more dangerous and perilous it is for the entire country. Therefore, irrespective of the unreasonable stand that Shri Longowal and his friends are taking in public at least—I do not know if this is their private opinion also—and the public posture of confrontation which is being taken by them, it is the duty of the Government which is ruling the country not to give up, not to resort to despair, but to make determined, patient and consistent efforts and take

initiative to see that some way out is found out by which this matter can gradually be resolved. I know the Minister will tell us that it is precisely because of that they have released some of the leaders hoping that they would respond. Well, so far as their release goes, I welcome it, but the question has been raised as to why other leaders have not been released. If some have been released, why not others? .... A technical argument is being put forward by the Government that the persons who were released were those who were detained under the N.S.A., and those who were not released, there may be specific charges against them. If there are specific charges against them, of course, it is upto the Government, charges can also be withdrawn, or they can be put on trial for those charges and the matter can be expedited. I am not in favour of letting the things drag on for months and months together. I think that the Akali leaders who were associated with the earlier negotiations and talk before Operation Blue Star should all be available. If they do not choose to come for talk, if they continue to put forward impossible conditions, well, it is for the Government to see that public opinion is mobilised and educated against that unreasonable stand of theirs. Ultimately, the only way we can break this deadlock is by mobilising democratic and nationalist public opinion in the country in favour of a settlement and against the obviously, patently unreasonable stand which is being taken by some of these Akali leaders. Their view should be isolated from the bulk of public opinion. I think, we have missed the opportunity once long ago when it was possible and I make bold to say that there was a time when the majority of ordinary Sikhs, brothers and sisters in Punjab, ordinary farmers and toiling people were not at all in favour of these methods and violence and what the extremists were doing. There was a time when by taking certain bold steps, making certain unilateral declarations, I feel the Government could have succeeded in isolating at that time Bhindranwale and his people from the masses of ordinary peace loving Sikhs. We have missed the bus as far as this is concerned.

Today, it is regrettable that perhaps majority of the Sikhs, the psychology at least, has become not very different from that of the extremists, and the problem has become ten times more difficult to solve.

I would suggest that initiatives must be taken. This matter cannot be solved only by the type of certain economic measures which were announced by the Prime Minister at Hussainwala the other day. Of course, I welcome them. That by itself is not going to solve the problem.

The Minister must be familiar with the open letter which has been addressed to the Prime Minister by the Sikh Forum a few days ago. I hope, you have read it. I do not know what is the attitude of the Government towards this Sikh forum. I have read this document very carefully. And I certainly find that it does not echo the demands or the pre-conditions or the

postures of the Akali leadership at all. Many of these people, who are the signatories to this letter and who are the participants of the Sikh Forum are ex-service people, who I think have served this country with great distinction in times of danger and in times of war, and a number of others who are also distinguished people in their own walks of life. They have put forward certain proposals. I do not agree with all their proposals either. For example, they have said that all the people who have been arrested and put in prison on the charge of extremist activities or are associated with the extremist or terrorist activities should be released *en masse*. I do not agree with that, because I think that there are definitely some extremists among those people who are arrested. I also would like to say here that our reports from Punjab say that a large number of innocent people are also being arrested, rounded up and locked up by the police. I have received reports that in some villages those people who are well known as extremists and territorists and belonging to that village are at large. They are going about openly. But from that very village, perhaps fifteen, twenty, thirty or forty innocent young men are being rounded and locked up. I think this kind of attitude is not going to solve any problem. I am not for indiscriminate releasing of everybody. I am for some kind of a screening machinery or Screening Committee to be set up by the Government. That particular point has been put forward by the Sikh Forum also. And when that Screening Committee goes into this, those who are obviously victims of indiscriminate arrests and who have no connection and nothing to do with the extremists, should not be held in custody and they should be released.

Sir, now I will just briefly mention some points which I think should be the basis of some initiative. The first point and this is the minimum, obviously minimum now, without conceding which the doors towards an ultimate settlement of the problem will never be opened. This has become the common demand of every Sikh now, not only the Akali, but every other Sikh also whether we like it or not. By the way, I am never in agreement with this idea that where an entire community is concerned, the Government chooses to select one particular party or organisation among that community and elevate them to the position of being the sole spokesmen of that community. Nobody else is taken into account by the Government. Are there no Sikhs expect the Akalis? There are other Sikhs. Some of them are in your party, some of them are in my party and some are in the CPM also and particularly there are all those people who belong to the Sikh Forum, who may be non-party people, who do not being to any party at all. They are not brought into the picture at all. You did the same thing in Assam. Before the disturbances, all the people in Assam are to be represented only by the All Assam Students Union, AASU. They are made the sole spokesman of the entire people of Assam, including all the minorities. The Muslims, the tribals, the other non-Assmese people, nobody among these was ever given any kind of status as

representatives in the prolonged negotiations which took place at one time. I think I was also a party to it. Only the AASU was there. Now, only the Akalis and nobody else will be talked to! Well, if you chose to do so, I do not think it will be very beneficial in the long run.

But, any way, the minimum point on which everything seems to be held up is the questions of this enquiry. I have no hesitation in saying that if you want to extend the scope of the enquiry, if you want to extend the terms of reference to cover the killings which have taken place before the murder of Shrimati Indira Gandhi and before Operation Blue Star, I have no objection. Let all those killings be gone into. But the Sikhs are naturally very much agitated and worked up now, and feeling alienated because of what happened in the early part of November last year; and I do not think that there is any ground on which the Government can refuse to hold an enquiry. After what took place in the capital city for three days and three nights, I shudder to think what the implications are going to be in the entire country in future. If large numbers of people who have directly participated in these crimes of murder, loot, arson and all that once they feel there is going to be no action against them, they are going scot-free, no enquiry will be held and no responsibility will be fixed, you are breeding a new category of people who, during those three days and three nights did what they liked. If they went scot-free, you cannot in future prevent recurrence of this kind of a thing in different parts of the country. Then what is the use of talking about law and order, laws and all that?

You know very well, the Minister knows, that non-official enquiry reports have been published. You cannot prevent people from reading them. One is a report by the PUCL, one is a report by a non-official committee headed by the former Chief Justice of India, Mr. Justice Sikri*. I found recently in the Punjab at bus stands that printed copies of the Sikri Report were being sold. People are buying, picking them up and reading them.

*** *** ***

The PUCL report has been circulated: and the very disturbing thing is, I can tell you that the longer the Government drags its feet on this question of an enquiry, more and more conviction is growing among the Sikhs that the Government has something to hide, and that the Government does not want an enquiry because it will reveal many things which will not be to the liking of the Government or the ruling party. Therefore, with all the insistence at my command I would say: if you want to change the situation and bring about some reconciliation at some—I do not say that simply by ordering an enquiry, immediately everything will be settled; it is not so simple now—

*Referring to Justice S.M. Sikri, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India.

without this, nothing can be settled. That is also true. Therefore, I would plead with the Government that they should find their way to ordering an enquiry with the least possible delay, and the terms of reference may be extended to cover other incidents also. I have no objection to that. Now about the Anandpur Sahib resolution. I am not referring to what is supposed to be the original resolution. I am referring to the 1978 Ludhiana resolution, which was adopted at a big, general conference of the Akali party. The text is given here in the letter of the Sikh Forum—the full text. There are twelve resolutions. I do not think the Minister will claim that this resolution has got anything in it which smacks of secessionism or separatism or anything like that. I do not know what the original resolution was. Perhaps it was very objectionable; but as far as the 1978 resolution goes, that part of it which deals with Centre-State relations, talks about the need for a more federal Constitution, more powers to the states and all that—I think it is resolution No. 1 out of these 12 resolutions. I do not think there is in it anything which can be called to be outside the ambit of the Constitution. They are demanding certain constitutional reforms in the spirit of what they consider to be the true spirit of federalism. My suggestion is that portion of this resolution should be referred to the Sarkaria Commission. It comes within the terms of reference of the Sarkaria Commission. That Sarkaria Commission is presided over by a very eminent Sikh judge and jurist. Let that Sarkaria Commission go into this part of the resolution, and pronounce on it.

Regarding Chandigarh, river water dispute and those other disputed villages on the border of Chandigarh and Haryana, my impression was that in the days before Operation Blue Star, we had more or less come to a common understanding on these issues at least. What remained was that the government should announce it. To this day nothing has been announced; even that Chandigarh should be the Capital City of the Punjab is not announced to this day. Is it still because of the pressure of some people in Haryana? I do not know. Possibly, it is; it was decided at that time. But the average Sikh can legitimately suspect even today after so much blood has been shed, they are not sure whether Chandigarh will be given to Punjab. I think on this matter the Government is adding fuel to the fire by dragging its feet unnecessarily. The Prime Minister has announced—a very welcome announcement at Hussainiwala—that the work on the Thein Dam will be completed and expedited. In this connection, I just want to say that there is another big project in the Punjab, the hydel project at Nangal. It has been completed and about 6000 workers, most of whom are Sikhs, are now being declared surplus; and they are going to be retrenched. So, I would request the Government to look into these matters and see that these workers who have skill and the experience, who have constructed the hydel project at Nangal, instead of being thrown into the arms of unemployment now, may

be employed on this Thein Dam which the Prime Minister has assured will be completed.

These extremists and pro-extremist forces are not being prevented from holding meetings in the Punjab for the simple reason that they can hold meetings inside Gurdwara. Everyday, they are holding a meeting in the Gurdwara. But secular forces and democratic forces who are opposed to extremism, they are not allowed to hold any meeting because there is a blanket ban on meetings. This is a very curious state of affairs. The extremists go on holding meetings and spreading their message through the Gurdwara meetings and those who are opposed to them, who are fighting for the upholding of secularism and the unity of the country, on them, this ban of meetings is operative. Someway must be found out for this; otherwise, you will never be able to mobilize people. We do not believe that this crisis can be solved purely by administrative means and purely by Government agencies. People are also interested and they should be given a scope to mobilize themselves and to speak out.

There are in the Punjab set-up, sometimes on paper, at least a number of Consultative Committees, Communal Amity Committees at different levels, district level, central level in the State and so on. Those Consultative Committees and Communal Amity Committees and so on, to the best of my knowledge, are existing only on paper; they have not been functioning seriously. My party in the Punjab is very much interested that these committees should be made to function. All the parties who are interested in communal amity should be given a chance to function through these committees and do extensive propaganda among the people generally, so that one-sided propaganda by the extremists alone is not allowed.

Finally, on these two issues on which the deadlock should be broken are: release of those leaders who are still being kept in prison; releasing some and not releasing others creates a very pernicious sort of a situation and the question of the enquiry. Without these two, I don't think anybody will listen. The Minister had told me a few days ago that a three-man committee of the Cabinet of which he is a distinguished member, is supposed to proceed to the Punjab for a visit to various places and to meet various people; that was several days ago. But, now, suddenly, we do not hear or read anything more about the visit of that committee. What has happened? When is that committee going? Is it going or is it not going? Are they prepared to take any more specific or concrete measures to announce it? 'If we agree to this thing can you guarantee that those people will immediately change their mind and come running to the negotiating table. I cannot guarantee. The thing has become too complex and difficult now for anybody to guarantee anything like that. But, at least, if the Government takes up forthwith a stand on

specific measures, then it is possible to show to the people the unreasonable stand of those people who want to be unreasonable; and they may be isolated and public opinion can be roused against them and that is the only way, step by step, we can move towards a settlement.

DETERIORATION IN LAW AND ORDER*

Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, the discussion under Rule 193, which I am raising, refers to the law and order situation in the country with particular reference to recent spurt in incidents of terrorism, secessionism and kidnappings.

Sir, I do not wish to treat this subject as a party matter. I hope the discussion which follows will also be free from accusation being hurled by one party against another. The situation has become so serious that it is a matter of national concern. What we see now is not a law and order situation but complete lawlessness and disorder spreading all over the country and it is reaching a dimension which will very soon threaten this country with disintegration and disunity. I hope the Government does not under-estimate, in any way, the gravity of this question. It is not a simple question of law and order. This problem, at one time, was more or less confined to the border States of the country. But it is no longer so. The terrorist violence which was concentrated at one time in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the Kashmir Valley, is now spreading like cancer to Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Bihar and so many places in the country, not to speak of this capital city of Delhi where we are living in and working. Sir, today nobody can say that he is safe in Delhi. If terrorists or violent elements choose to strike at anybody and at any place in Delhi, we can rest assured that there is no security or no protection against them. We are seeing so many incidents taking place.

The law enforcement agencies in this country, ranging from the security forces, even to the judiciary, are more or less in different degrees of paralysis. I do not, for a moment, want to decry the good work that is done by the security forces at various times. But the general picture I am talking about is that in the face of these attacks which are taking place, there seems to be a kind of paralysis in the law and order machinery, the law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary. This is aggravated, of course, by the fact that the bureaucracy which deals with these problems is getting increasingly corrupted. As a result, Sir, the general public are feeling more and more helpless and demoralised. This is a serious matter which the Government must now treat as a national problem.

---

* Raising a discussion under Rule 193 regarding general deterioration in law & order situation in various parts of the country; *L.S. Deb.*, 10 December 1991.

This terrorism has found now areas in which to operate, now 'killing fields' as the expression goes. For example, in Haryana, we have seen a couple of days ago, a massacre which was carried out in Tohana. During the first one hundred days after the general elections took place, in the Terai alone, 49 incidents took place, in which 38 people were killed and this is, by the way, excluding the two nefarious incidents which had taken place in Pilibhit. In Rudrapur in Uttar Pradesh, while a crowd was sitting and watching Ramayana just before Dussehra, 50 persons were massacred.

I should say that the Sikh farmers who have settled in the Terai and who are engaged in farming there, are being more and more alienated by the behaviour or rather the misbehaviour of the police towards them. The police seem to think that any farmer, if he is a Sikh, must be a terrorist, and the way they have been behaving is alienating the farmers more and more.

As far as the Punjab is concerned, nowadays, everybody is saying and writing that these things which are happening in Haryana or Uttar Pradesh are a fallout of the Army deployment which has taken place in the Punjab. It is said that because of the deployment of the Army on quite a massive scale in the Punjab, the militants or terrorists whatever you like to call them—are being squeezed out and are therefore shifting their operations into the nearby adjacent States.

I would like to hear more from the hon. Minister about this Army deployment. A very large number of troops has been sent to the Punjab. I do not know the number exactly, may be between two and three Divisions. They are now on an operation which has a code name 'Rakshak II'. I do not know what happened to Rakshak II What was the result of it? I wonder whether the results which the Government hoped to achieve were achieved or not. Now, we are having Rakshak II. I would like to know what are the tasks which have been assigned to these three Divisions of the Army, now deployed in the Punjab. Of course, while operating in the Punjab, they are under the control of the State Administration. It is for the State Administration to deploy them. Unfortunately, there is no elected Government in the Punjab and State Administration means the Governor and his advisers. Therefore, I would like to know what are the tasks assigned to this Army strength that has been deployed in the Punjab.

I am asking this question particularly because in Assam there is another Army operation going on by the name of 'Operation Rhino'. Sir, I am very much disturbed, I think everybody should be disturbed, by the reports which are coming which may or may not be completely correct or verified. There are allegations of very serious type. There are reports of Army excesses being committed against the civilian population in Assam. It is for the Government to look into.

Just now, a little while ago, a deputation of some lawyers from Guwahati came here. They met me also. They had brought with them what they claim to be a documented evidence regarding excesses committed by the Army against the ordinary civilians in Assam. To whatever extent it may be true, one reason seems to be that the Army in Assam is being permitted to arrest people, to search houses, to interrogate people whom they arrest. It is alleged that these people who are taken for interrogation to Army Camps are being mal-treated and tortured there. This may be some exaggeration in the Report, I do not know. That is for the Minister to tell. But the duties assigned to the Army in such cases, I am speaking as much in the interest of the Army as of anybody else, as far as I know the Army rules which have to be supplemented by clear directives by the Government itself do not permit the Army personnel to carry out this kind of operation. They are not expected to do it; they do not like to do it and they should not do it. They do not like entering the houses, searching for people arresting them, taking them to the Army camps for interrogation. If they arrest anybody they are supposed to hand him over to the nearest police station.

I have not yet heard of any such reports or allegations from Punjab. Of course, about the police many allegations have reached us. But I am told that the Army in Punjab has not been permitted to do other things except to do night time patrolling. They are not permitted to arrest people and if they arrest somebody they hand him over to police. They are not permitted to interrogate or to search the houses.

If this is true, I would like to know why one set of rules is covering the assignment of the Army in Punjab and another set of rules is governing their performance in Assam. There must be some clear cut directive about this. I should say it is not fair to the Army also to ask them to do this kind of work. It is not their work. It is the work of other paramilitary or security forces.

Sir, according to the view of the Director General of Police of U.P. whose statement has appeared in the Press, the selective killing of Hindus in Punjab and U.P is meant to provoke a Hindu backlash. Of course, this is not something new. We all know that selective killing is always done to provoke backlash and some sort of counteraction. Generally they have failed. Our people have risen above all these things. They are not able to provoke communal backlash. But, police admits its inability to cope with the highly sophisticated equipment which these terrorists groups are using. This includes the fire arms, the explosives, mines, vehicles and even their wireless equipment are superior and more sophisticated than what the security forces have. In fact, as far as collection of intelligence information and supply of intelligence is concerned, I apprehend that they are superior in that field also.

The Government must take a serious view of this and tell us what they propose to do. How long is this to go on in this way? In any case, the Army

deployment in the Punjab, in my view, is not going to be any solution by itself. If it is a run up to the elections which have been promised, we should be told then that in the run up to the promised elections which are supposed to be held by February, this Army deployment which has taken place with a specific and limited purpose, what is that purpose?

But in any case, we feel that unless these measures are combined with some political initiatives and some political measures which will give confidence to the people in the Punjab, simple Army deployment is not going to solve the problem at all.

So, I would suggest because this is connected with the whole question of violence and law and order—that during these coming two or three months, the Government should bestir itself and try to take political initiative or political measures, may be on the basis of the Rajiv-Longowal Accord. There were many items in that and I do not want to go into those details now. But on that basis, certain things should be done which will give confidence, particularly to the Sikh majority in the Punjab and allay their fears and their feeling of alienation.

Then, Sir, the external hand, of course, is a major factor. The supply of weapons and training to the militants in the Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir from across the border is well known. It is not disputed now.

The Director General of the ISI (Inter Services Intelliegence) of Pakistan, Major General Assad Durrani, is reported to be coordinating the activities on both these fronts, the Punjab front and the Kashmir front thereby stimulating the demands for cessation from India.

As far as dealings with Pakistan on this matter are concerned, our Government from time to time assures us that they have received from the Pakistan authorities, even from the Prime Minister of Pakistan, assurances that no such interference in our internal affairs is being carried on but we find that there is absolutely no improvement whatsoever in the situation.

Then Sir, in the North-Eastern Region of our country, you will find no place has remained unaffected. There is a growing sense of desperation, I should say among the young men, particularly, in the North-East. A feeling of desperation is there both on the political and economic scene. Above all, there is a realisation that no redress of long standing grievances can be had by lawful or peaceful means. It is a very dangerous idea. Once it grips the mind of the younger people there, the consequences are inevitable. This has led to an eruption of violence all along the North-Eastern border with frightening intensity. I do not have to repeat all those things that have been

happening there, whether it is Nagaland or Manipur or Tripura or Meghalaya or anywhere on the border.

Therefore, I would also, in this connection, urge the Government one thing. When they are talking about these issues, like we have just been discussing about Meghalaya, tomorrow, we may have to discuss about Manipur. But an additional factor which the Government should bear in mind is the fact that this is such a sensitive region on the border of our country, there is a great deal of alienation among the people there and they are tribal people, therefore, we should be very cautious and very careful in handling the political issues which are concerned with those States and not do something which will only aggravate the feeling of alienation.

Insurgency is an expression of the people's disillusionment with a non-performing model of development, which is non-performing due to years and years of economic neglect.

Bureaucratic bungling, rampant corruption and political manipulation, all these factors combined have created a disillusionment among the people of the North-Eastern region. Incidentally, these are basically the same factors which have caused people alienation in Kashmir also. This feeling of disillusionment is, of course, being exploited by the pro-Pakistani forces in order to raise this demand for Independence from India. Without that basic cause of alienation, these elements would not have found a fertile ground on which to work.

I regret to say, though I have begun by saying—I do not want to blame; I am not blaming any party—what is happening in Assam? The Assam Government seems to be impervious to the grievances and aspirations of the tribals, many tribal communities in Assam; whether they are Bodos or whether they are people of other hilly areas of Assam. The Government of Assam is impervious to their grievances and their aspirations.

And as I said earlier, you must look into this Operation Rhino and please tell us whether the Army there has been instructed to carry out these various assignments which are not, strictly speaking, the Army's duty at all and which open the way for all kinds of allegations, of ill-treatment, excesses and so on. This is one type of violence which we are facing.

The Resolution which is moved here is, of course, much wider. For example, I could ask a question: why is there growing violence in the form of murder, of rape, of arson, of looting? Yesterday, in this House, the hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Shri M.M. Jacob, gave some figures in which, according to him, upto this year, in 1991, 2448 cases of dowry deaths have been registered. Of course, I do not know what does

this mean? One has to go into them. Dowry death means deliberate killing or burning of unfortunate women; it can mean suicide also. Somebody is responsible for it. I am not interested in the technical difference between a murder and an unfortunate woman being driven to suicide. The point is somebody is responsible for it. These figures do not tell us anything, how many people were proceeded against, how many were arrested, how many were punished or what happened. 2448 cases of dowry deaths this year have been registered; out of which, according to him, Shri M.M. Jacob, 1152 took place in U.P., 568 took place in Maharashtra and 305 took place in Andhra Pradesh. I do not go into the others.

5916 cases of rape have been registered this year, out of which 1532 were registered in Madhya Pradesh, 928 in U.P. and 403 in Bihar.

12902 cases of molestation have been registered; they must be serious molestations to be registered; 7116 cases of kidnapping and abduction have been registered; all these cases are of women; these are all crimes against women.

So, I would say that you can get similar figures about attack on Harijans, on tribals; they have been recorded in the proceedings of the House several times. The curve is going up all the time; it is not going down. Why is it so? I think we have to meet this fact that the socially disadvantaged sections, the weaker-sections among whom I count the Harijans, I count women, I count tribals, these disadvantaged and weaker-sections are demanding their rights, social, economic, and equality, their self-respect; and they are no longer prepared to take them lying down, the social oppression by those people who exploit them. Previously they used to. Previously the spirit of resistance, the spirit of protest was not very much in evidence. But then, the world is changing. Everything is changing in the world. And these people are no longer willing to take these things meekly and mildly. They are protesting, they are trying to resist and the result is that more ferocious reprisals are taking place against them. I think the new spirit among these people is something which we should welcome. But it is not just enough to welcome them. It is the job of the Government and the State to help them to stand up for their rights. Otherwise, these crimes against them will go on increasing.

Then, there is the question of criminalisation of politics. Now it has become a habit, I regret to say, of depending on muscle power, money power also of course, without money power you cannot get muscle power. Money power or black money power, let me say; the power of black money, in order to enlist the muscle power on your side in order to get votes. I suggest that all parties should examine their own performances in different States. I am not leaving out anybody. Some may be more guilty, some may be less guilty.

Some may be doing it on a bigger scale. But the fact of the matter is that it has become a chronic and pernicious habit in the country now that you cannot get votes and you cannot win elections without enlisting muscle power, which requires lavish spending of black money power. Now this has led to respectability being given to well-known Mafia, elements of the Mafia who are well known, and in their own localities and communities are well-known to everybody, as local criminals and Mafia. They are being given respectability by us, by all of us. It does not stir anybody's conscience that these people are being enlisted in order to suppress the right of some people to cast their votes and compelling some other people to indulge in false voting.

Even in this latest by-elections which were held just now, I do not wish to name these constituencies, there are widespread allegations of large scale rigging having been done, even when it was not required, even where it was not required that they should do rigging. In any case, somebody was sure to win. Why has this mass scale rigging been employed? Because we have got into that habit now.

I believe that the other day in some talk with his confidants the Prime Minister had also expressed his distress at this fact. That when it was at all not necessary to do rigging why do people do rigging?

Anyway, I would say, that this criminalisation of politics, particularly in the context of elections which is leading to lot of violence, lot of deaths, lot of killings, how it is to be overcome? I think we have to look at things more in basic way and some radical electoral reforms, which we always talk about of course, are urgently required.

The State has got the duty to defend the rights of the weaker sections to cast their votes fearlessly and freely. People are being prevented from casting their votes in large numbers. If this is not done, if we do not put our heads together and evolve some electoral reforms, which will enable these people to exercise the franchise, which is guaranteed to them under the Constitution; if from year to year they are going on being denied of this right, well the credibility of the whole electoral system, which is enshrined in our Constitution is at stake. We may go on saying, "Yes, I have won, you have lost" or "You have won I have lost", but the credibility of the whole system in the eyes of the people is going down rapidly all the time. And if the electoral system ultimately loses all its credibility, well I do not know what will be left of, what we now call, the democratic system by which we are functioning. That democratic system is based on the right of adult franchise. If the right of adult franchise is going to be violated and distorted all the time, there will be nothing left of the system after some time and that will spell the doom of democracy, parliamentary democracy, in this country.

Then there are communal killings; there are caste killings spreading all the time. I would say that the aggressive fundamentals, whether it is of the Hindu variety or of the Muslim variety or any other, the aggressive fundamentalism and the religious extremism, which try to use religion for political purposes have also become a major danger and a big feature of our country's social life now. How many people have lost their lives? I have not got the figures with me now.

Then, unemployed youth, unemployed and frustrated youth, it is not difficult to lure them to the cult of the gun. This is happening. Are we going to solve this problem simply by looking at it as a law and order problem? In the tribal areas particularly, which are very much neglected, what is particularly required are developmental activities, which will improve the life of those tribal people. without that you cannot wean them away from the influence of whomever you may call Naxalities or you may call them anything you like or People's War Group in Andhra Pradesh. The basic cause is alienation of these tribal people, and no change in the quality of their life, which gives interested quarters the possibility of recruiting them for the use of the gun. And you know what is happening? We are not able to do any thing. They are able to kidnap officials; take them away; release them if they like; if not they demand ransom money for that; either you pay ransom money or they have to pay with their lives. The police is too paralysed, I am afraid demoralised, to do anything about it. This is going on; it is admitted every day.

Another fact I would like to mention is that this Government has evolved no policy yet towards kidnapping. What is your policy about kidnapping? Now it is becoming a regular feature. Demands are made for releasing somebody else. Otherwise, the kidnapped hostage will not be released. And some are generally for release of somebody who is already arrested. What is your policy about it? Have you thought of working out any policy? The State Government in one place and the Central Government in another place, they are all behaving differently; they do not seem to have any norm or any commonly agreed principle on which they should proceed. We had many different experiences which show that there is a complete anarchy of thinking on this question as far as the Government is concerned:

We had one experience with the kidnapping of Shri Mufti Sayeed's daughter in Kahsmir. Then we had many other experiences also in various States. We have also had the kidnapping and killing of a foreigner. One Soviet Engineer was killed in Assam. The Charged' Affairs of the Romanian Embassy Mr. Radu, was kidnapped in broad daylight from just near his house in Delhi and disappeared for 48 days or so. And such a huge operation we were told everyday was put into motion by many thousands of police

personnel equipped with all kinds of vehicles, wireless, walkie-talkies and what not; they searched several thousand houses in Delhi and they could not do anything. Ultimately thanks to the mercy of those kidnappers for whatever reasons I do not know what factors motivated them—quietly released him and he came back home. Utter incompetence of the Delhi Police and the security agencies was never more clearly demonstrated than in this case of Mr. Radu. Later, he had said that he was kept in some house here in the city itself. They were busy closing all sorts of borders—border of Haryana, border of U.P.—and searching for him high and low. They are quite incompetent and they are not able to do anything.

You must have some more serious look at this whole phenomenon because this is not the end of it. It will go on happening. You will have to evolve some kind of a policy regarding kidnapping—policy means not only what attitude you will take towards these people but also on the ground, you should have a special kind of task force or some thing which can cope with this kind of a situation.

Kidnapping and killing of anybody is bad. But killing of foreigners is particularly bad because it will discourage foreign technicians and foreign engineers from coming to our country. They do not come here except when they are attached to some project or working for something which will be of benefit to our country. But if we earn a reputation that this is the kind of thing which may happen here and there is no remedial action, who will want to come here? Our country is becoming risk number one in the whole world community. We were not like this a few years ago.

During the current year, upto November—these are also the Home Ministry's figures—in the Punjab, 1992 civilians have been killed. You know what type of indiscriminate, merciless killing is taking place of completely innocent persons who have got nothing to do with politics of Khalistan or anything. This is being done to create a climate of terror in order to force people to leave their homes and their villages and to migrate. This is being done in order to provoke a backlash. It is being done in order to create a pressure which will compel the rest of the country to agree to this demand for Khalistan to which I hope, we will never agree. But this is being done. 474 security personnel have been killed upto November this year 2032 terrorists or suspected terrorists have also been killed.

If the security forces are complaining of inadequate equipment, inadequate weaponry, unsophisticated tools with which they are asked to confront these people, what does the Government propose to do about it? It is, of course, not just enough to give them better weapons. There has to be, I think, a much higher level of motivation. After all, these men are also risking their lives. They have got wives and children at home. Unless they have a much higher

level of motivation to carry on this day and night, everyday, 24 hours, kind of tension in which they have to work and to fight, it is extremely difficult. We must take firm measures to see that excesses are not committed. Out of desperation excesses should not be committed against innocent people and civilian population. If we cannot stop that, it will only lead to the breeding of new terrorists; more terrorists are created by excesses and atrocities which are committed. So we have to be careful about it.

*** *** ***

What I am saying is that the threat of the country is disintegration. It has come to the level of disintegration. It would not be under-estimated and minimized.

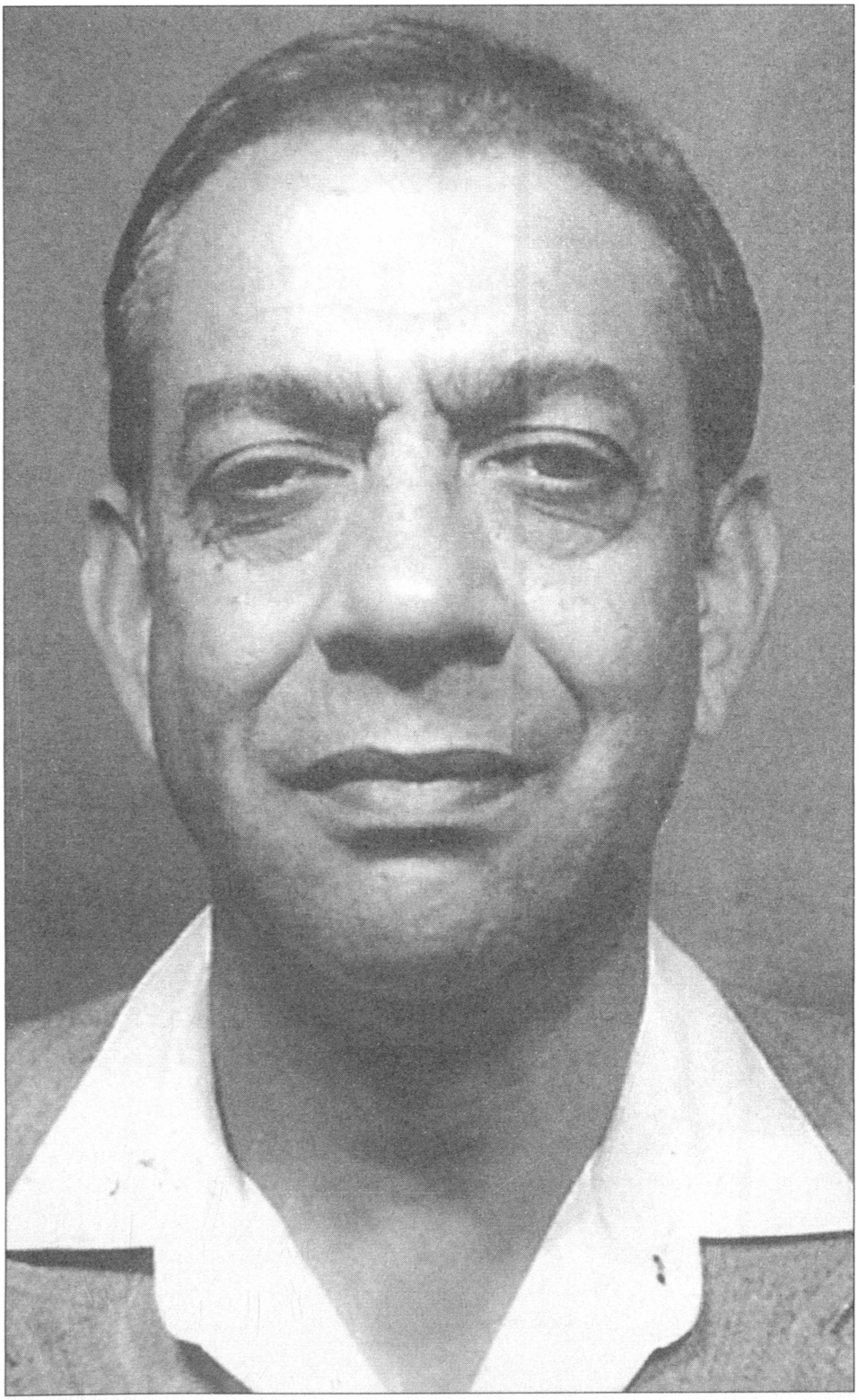
I would say towards the end of my remarks that the key to de-escalation—there are many factors of course—of tension and violent conflict in our country is ultimately a radical re-structuring of Centre-State relations. Without that you will never be able to get to the root of the matter. The States must be given a larger share of power for raising their own resources, for financing and executing their own development projects. They must not be treated as though they are beggars asking for charity from New Delhi. This feeling has got around to the nook and corner of this country now. It is irrespective of the party, whichever party may be running a State Government like this some may speak more loudly about this, some may not speak so loudly, but that is a fact.

After all, the framers of the Constitution so many years ago may not have thought of this as something necessary. But, years have passed, times have passed; the world has changed and a spirit of democracy is applauded in the world. Please try to take some lesson from what is happening in the country, in other countries and even from the Soviet Union. If there is always a feeling of excessive centralisation, excessive bureaucratisation and centralisation of powers, then, all kinds of centrifugal tendencies come to play. You see that has happened in other countries. If we do not want it to happen it here, please take timely action. More autonomy for the tribal region is essential. I am glad—unless I have misunderstood as to what has been said on behalf of the Government in the last few days—that in principle, at least it seems that the idea of a separate Jharkhand State has not been ruled out. What its territory will be, how it will be defined, how it will be delimited are matters which require a discussion. But, it seems in principle, the idea of a separate Jharkhand State for the tribal people has not been completely ruled out. What I have read, the Prime Minister had said and you had said, the idea of Uttarakhand State in the Garhwal region of UP where a devastating earthquake has taken place recently. I think, has not been ruled out. Certainly

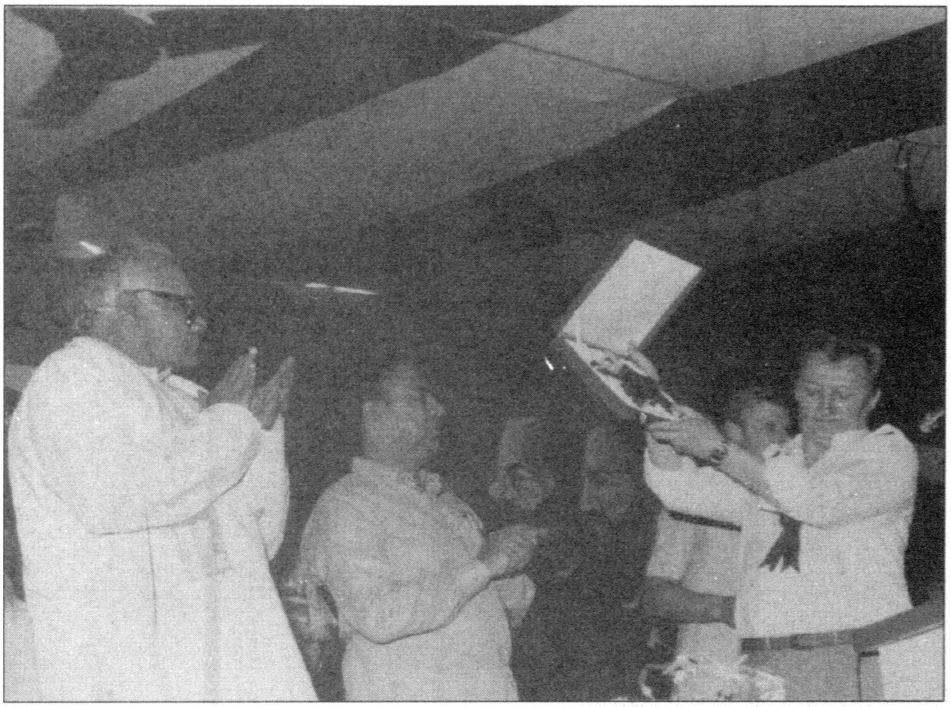
the U.P. Government has accepted it, the U.P. Assembly accepted it. These are good things, but all those things have been done in a piecemeal way. When some pressure mounts up and somebody in the Jharkhand area is threatening that if you do not give us a separate State, another Punjab will be created here. When that kind of language is spoken, then you come and say, 'Yes, yes, we will consider it'. This is not the way it should be done.

Let us take a comprehensive look at the entire structure of the federal State which we have been running all these years and see whether it is not necessary that the Constitution should be given a new look and there should be radical restructuring of powers between the Centre and the States which will help very largely. This is not a magical remedy for any thing, but it will help very largely to obviate this feeling of distress, of suspicion, of alienation which exists today. This has unfortunately been the development between the Centre and various parts of the country which is involving people in all kinds of activities, including rise in violence and talk of secession: "If we cannot get what we want here, we go out of the country. If you do not allow us to go out of the country, we will take to the guns." How do you indeed deal with it in a piecemeal way? This is a problem which is dominating our whole country's future now and I request finally the Government to look at this problem in a more comprehensive and overall way and think more deeply in consultation with other political parties and forces as to how this situation can be remedied before it is too late.

Shri Indrajit Gupta

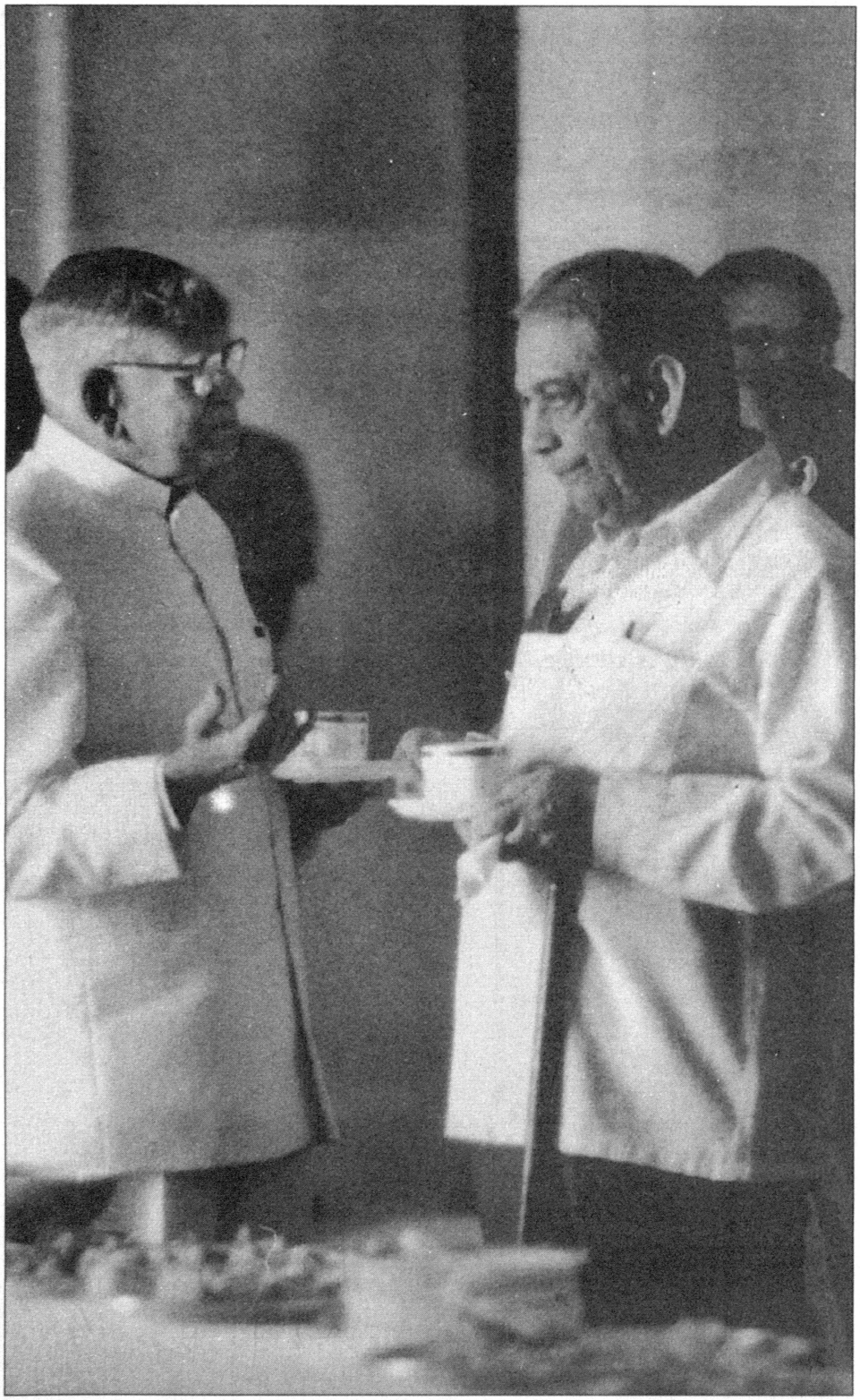


Shri Indrajit Gupta

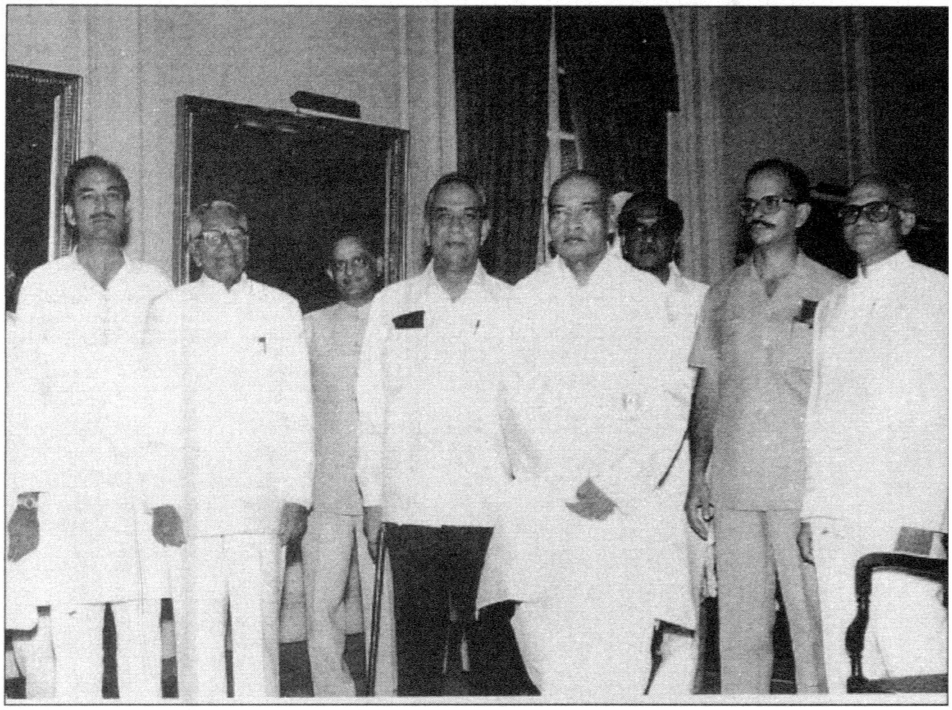


At the CPI Congress in Patna, 1986

Taking oath as Member of the Tenth Lok Sabha on his being appointed as the Speaker *pro tem*, Rashtrapati Bhawan, 9 July 1991



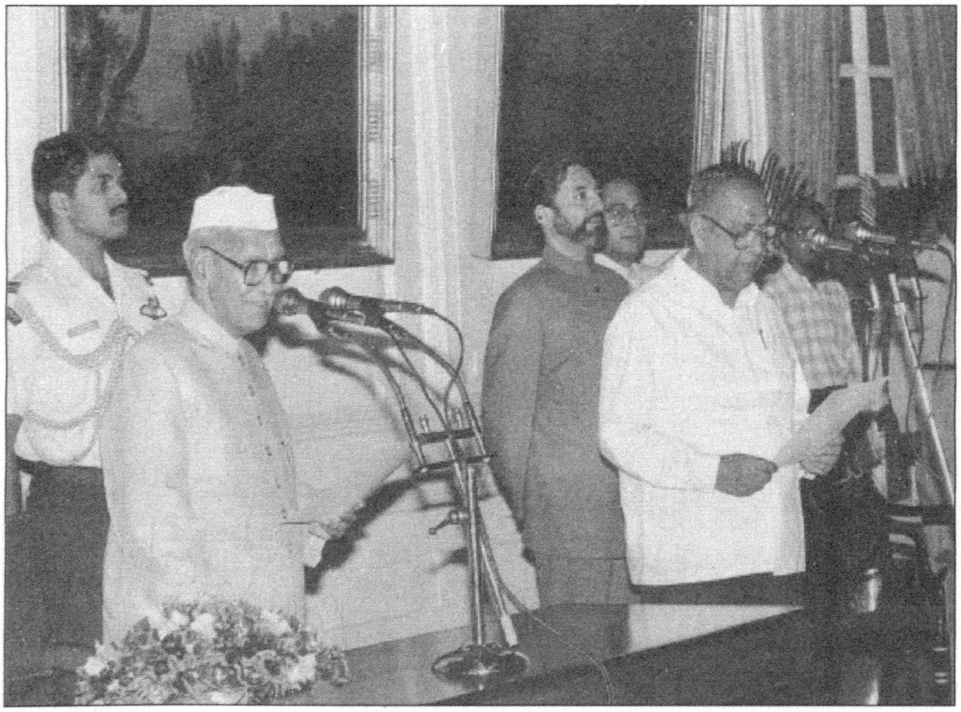
Sharing an informal moment with the then President,
Shri R. Venkataraman, Rashtrapati Bhawan, 9 July 1991



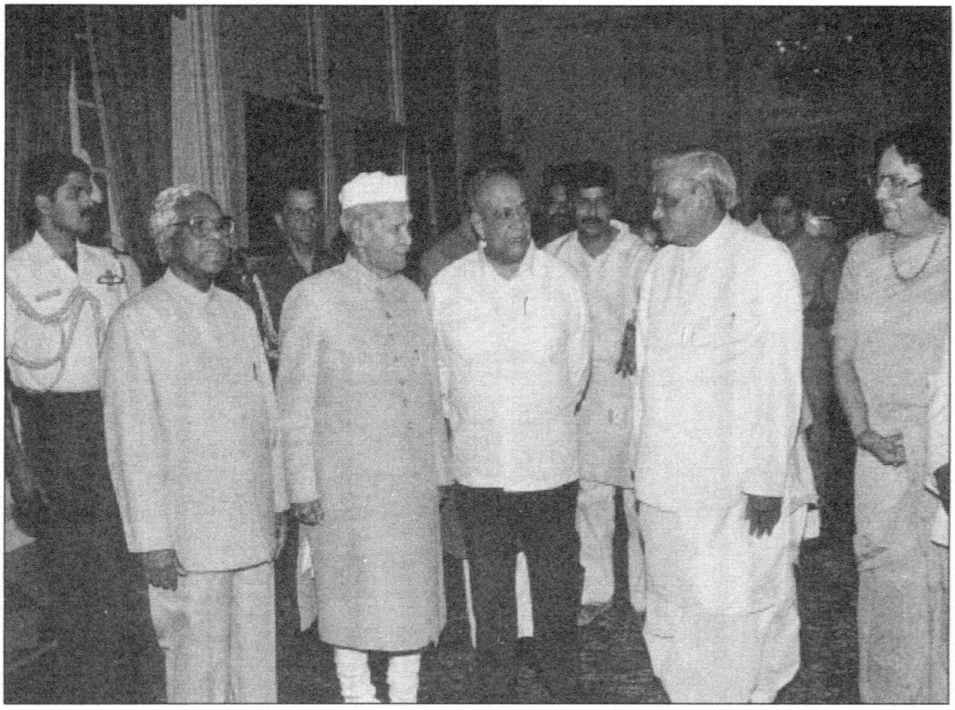
With the then President of India, Shri R. Venkataraman and the then Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao and other dignitaries at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, 9 July 1991

Addressing the Conference on Discipline and Decorum in Parliament and State Legislatures, held in the Central Hall of Parliament, New Delhi, 23-24 September 1992

With other dignitaries attending the Conference on Discipline and Decorum in Parliament and State Legislatures, New Delhi, 23-24 September 1992

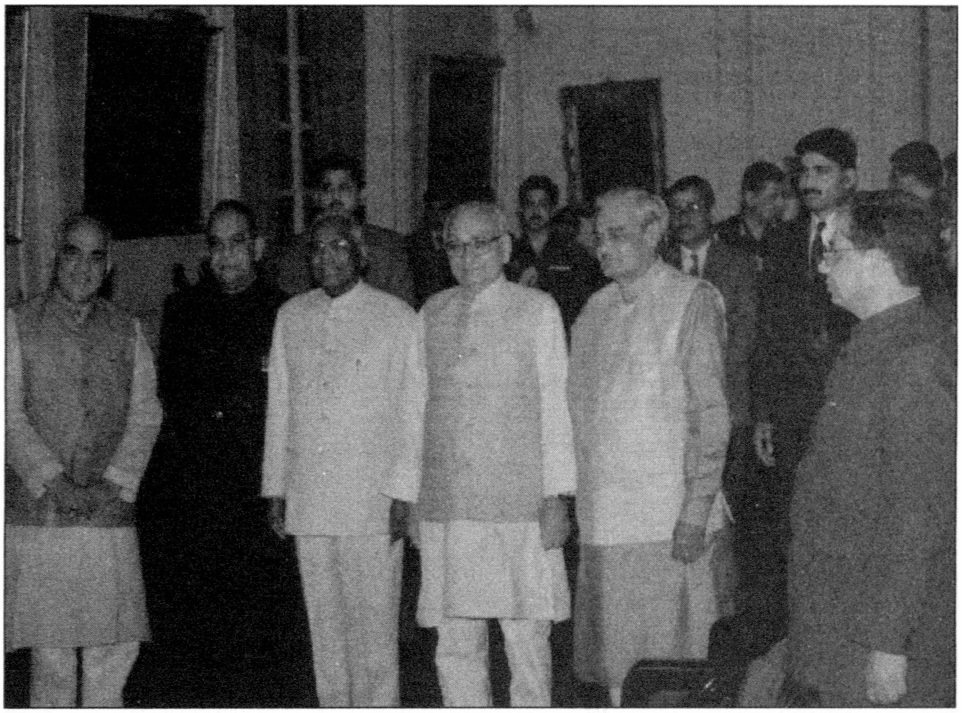


Taking oath as Member of the Eleventh Lok Sabha on his being appointed as the Speaker *Pro tem*, Rashtrapati Bhawan, 22 May 1996



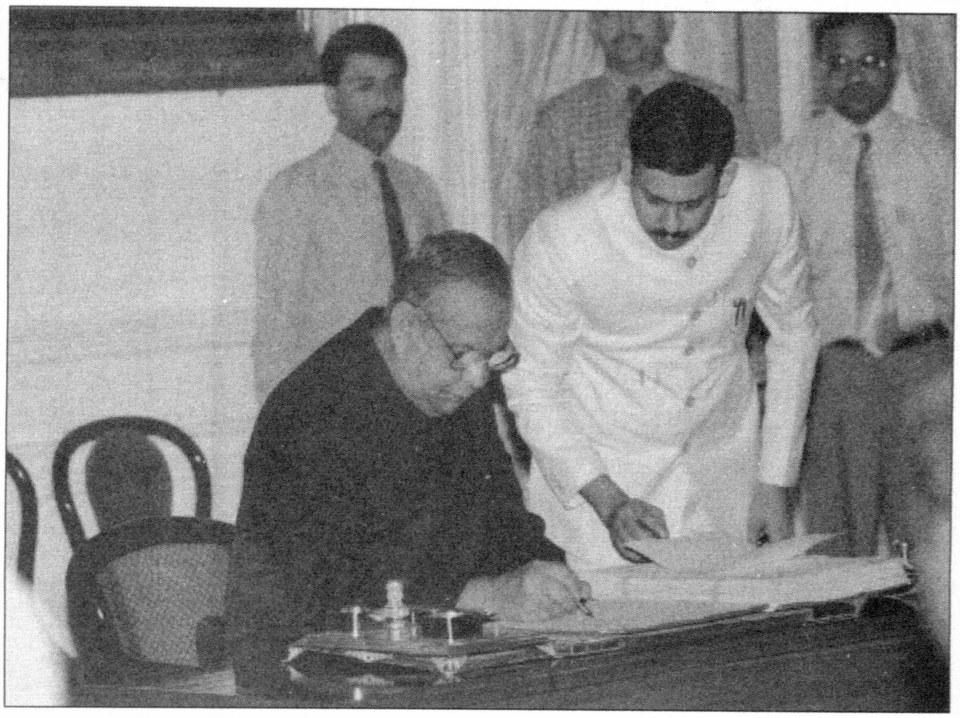
With the then President, Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma, the then Vice-President and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri K.R. Narayanan, the then Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and the then Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha, (Smt.) Najma Heptulla, 22 May 1996

Taking oath as Member of Twelfth Lok Sabha on being appointed as the Speaker *Pro tem*, Rashtrapati Bhawan, 23 March 1998

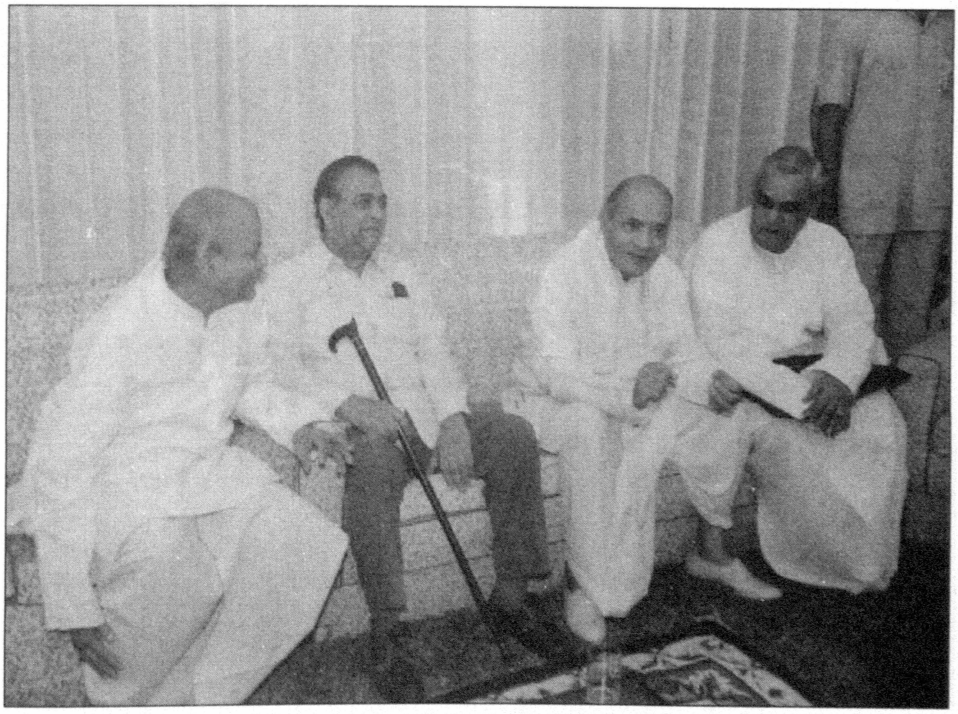


With the then President of India, Shri K.R. Narayanan, the then Vice-President and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri Krishan Kant, the then Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and the then Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Madan Lal Khurana, 23 March 1998

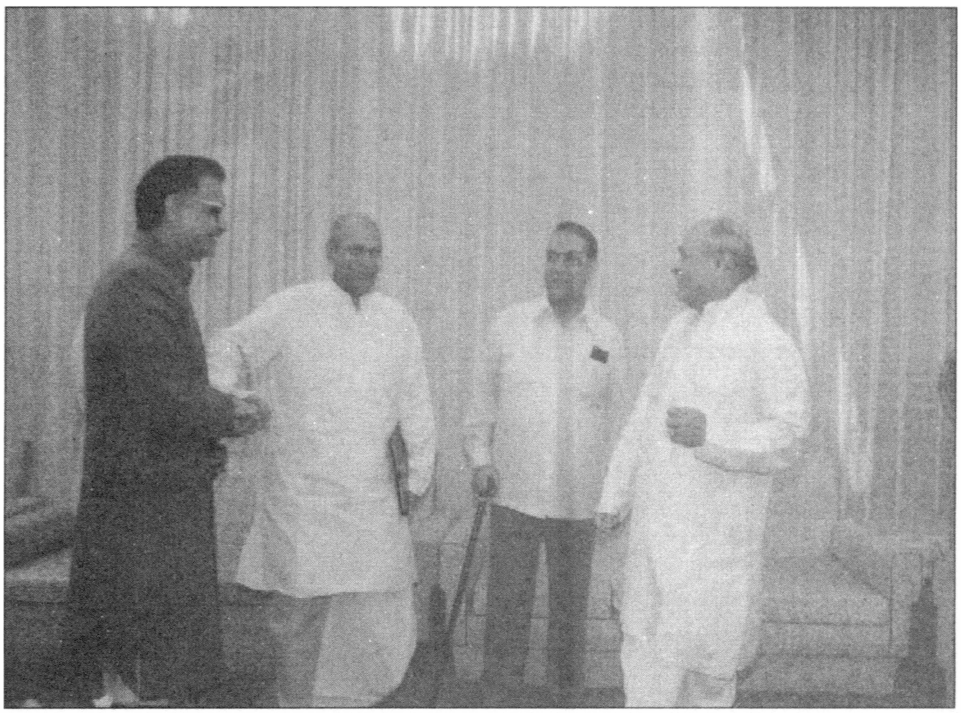
Taking oath as Member of the Thirteenth Lok Sabha on his being appointed as the Speaker *Pro tem*, Rashtrapati Bhawan, 20 October 1999



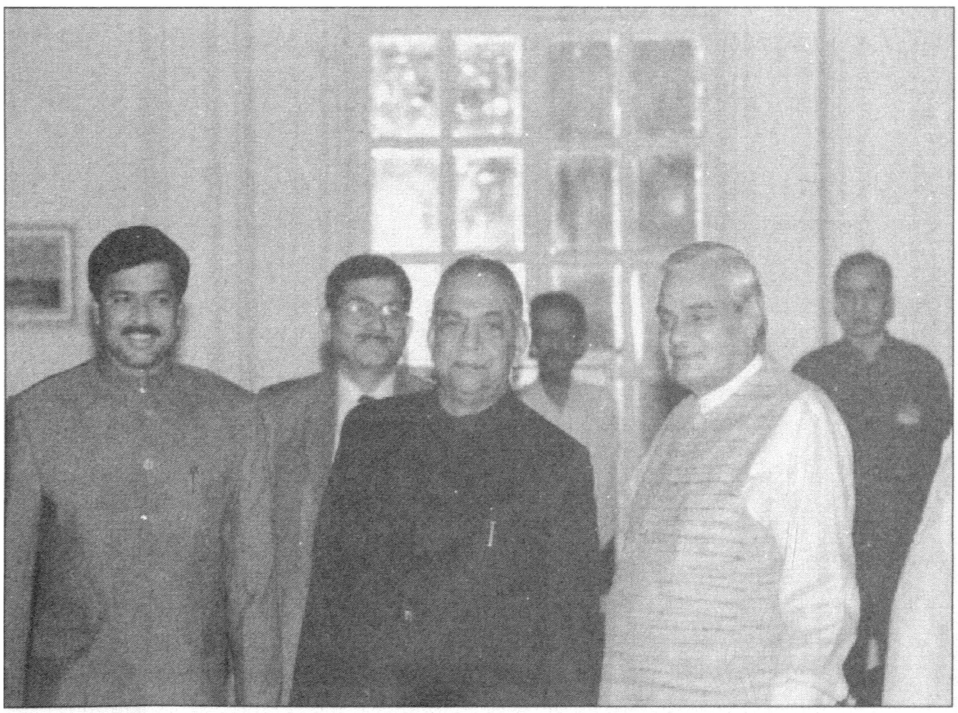
After taking oath on being appointed as the Speaker *Pro tem*,
Rashtrapati Bhawan, 20 October 1999



With Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Shri Rabi Ray



With Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Shri Shivraj V. Patil and Shri Rabi Ray



With Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Shri Pramod Mahajan

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

A STRONG PUBLIC SECTOR FOR A STRONG ECONOMY*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am one of those incorrigibles to whom Shri Jaipal Singh** referred and I am speaking on behalf of the incorrigibles. My brain has been washed and I am not in the fortunate position of those whose brains are unwashed. So I have to make clear once again our stand regarding this public sector. Let it be made quite clear that the public sector is not in our view equal to socialism. Everybody knows in the modern world that in countries where capitalist system flourishes there is an increasing tendency towards public sector or Government ownership in various sectors of economy. Nobody suggests in those countries that socialist changes or socialists reforms are being implemented. Nevertheless, the fact remains that in a country like ours we are firmly of the view that without a public sector in certain strategic sectors of the economy, it is not possible for a country like India, which has been underdeveloped and kept backward by certain external forces for so long, to develop at the speed at which it is required to develop and along lines on which it should develop. Therefore, there is nothing sentimental or doctrinaire about this. It arises out of hard reality, because I have yet to know of any underdeveloped country in the world, particularly in Asia or Africa, where it is being possible for them to build up their economy on a strong, independent footing without having a strong public sector in certain vital, strategic, key sectors of the economy. That is the reason why we do support the public sector and we shall continue to support it very strongly.

But, at the same time, that does not mean that we never criticise the public sector or the way it works. If a drowning man is handed out a life-belt he will use that life-belt. But because that life-belt may be old or rusty he will not throw it away and prefer to drown. We believe that the public sector in this country, as many hon. members have dilated upon, does suffer from some very-very glaring defects, irregularities, maladministration and all those things. It should be trenchantly criticised and exposed. But with what object? One object can be to make the object of the attack the abolition of the public sector altogether.

---

* Participating in the discussion on the Motion regarding Public Sector Industries and Public Sector Undertakings; *L.S. Deb.*, 13 December 1960.

**Referring to Shri Jaipal Singh, MP

...The other may be the purpose of rectification, because I believe all these things from which the public sector enterprises are suffering, many of which have been expanded upon here, are nothing divine or ordained; they are all man made things and anything which is man made can be corrected by man. Therefore, while extending full support to the public sector from this point of view when we believe it is a strategic necessity in a country like ours for building up and developing the economy, at the same time, any criticism we have to make of the working of that sector from its day-to-day aspect is only because we are motivated by a desire that the public sector should function better and more efficiently and should really be what it should be, namely, an effective instrument of planning in the hands of the Government. It should be an instrument or tool which can be used scientifically and in a planned way by the Government to advance the whole cause of the economy. If it does not fulfil that purpose, then certainly we shall be the first to oppose it and the way in which it works in this country.

As far as some of the most unfortunate consequences of the way things are being developed here sometimes are concerned, I should like to say this. Shri Jaipal Singh referred to the way in which Adivasis and so on are being evicted from their lands or not being rehabilitated and so on. On that there can be no two questions. I can assure him, however incorrigible we may be as regards the necessity of planning and public sector, that if it is a question of rehabilitating the people who are evicted, we shall fight tooth and nail and stand shoulder to shoulder with him to see that those people get their rights. But that does not mean that we make an overall attack on the public sector.

Having said that much, I shall proceed to the next point. Time is very limited. A question has been raised about the profitability, productivity and so on about the public sector enterprises. Shri Naushir Bharucha* has said, and in my view quite correctly, that profits cannot be an end in themselves. It is quite correct. But it is also true that we want these public sector enterprises to earn profits for the simple reason that if they are to serve as instruments of planning then they must have to make a contribution to our developmental revenue. I fully support the idea expressed on that by Shri Harish Chandra Mathur** but it is also true and I agree, that unless planning is done in such a way that planning of profits and planning of prices go hand in hand, these projects are not likely to serve the cause of the public and the country as they should.

For example, in a particular field, while the public sector enterprises may be thoroughly justified in placing considerations of profit above everything

*Referring to Shri Naushir Bharucha, MP

**Referring to Shri Harish Chandra Mathur, MP

else, in another sector, if it applies the same principle, it will lead to disastrous results. For example, mention has already been made about the antibiotic plant at Pimpri. I say that that plant cannot be put on the same footing as a plant set up for making machine tools or steel, for example. Antibiotic is something the people need. Vast millions in our country are suffering from diseases of every kind and it is impossible for them to afford imported drugs at high prices. Certainly, it is welcome that the Government of India should step in and set up an antibiotic plant.

*** *** ***

As far as my knowledge goes, when the Government of India entered into an agreement with the World Health Organisation and the United Nations agencies for the setting up of this plant—they have got some big grant there too—the terms of the agreement stipulated quite clearly that the object is to produce penicillin and other antibiotics most economically as a national enterprise on a sound business basis and naturally on a non-profit-making basis. But it does not mean that the company is to make no profit as such. What it means is that profiteering in drugs, in antibiotics, at the expense of the consumers, should not be done. That is what it means.

I find in the Annual Report of the Hindustan Antibiotics for 1959-60 that they very proudly claim a net profit of Rs. 76.85 lakh. If that was the Hindustan Machine Tools, I would be the first to cheer it, but the trouble is, we learn from reliable medical sources and medical men that penicillin can be sold at half the price at which it is being sold now. Obviously there is a margin. They are able to make Rs. 76 lakh as profit.

*** *** ***

You know the quality of the penicillin that is manufactured in the Hindustan Antibiotics. You know that a large number of medical men are rejecting it and I have seen it myself. They are just yellow lumpy things which coagulate into lumps. But for the fact that bulk purchases were made by the Army—and if these bulk purchases were stopped, I do not know what sort of crisis this company would fall into. I want good quality of antibiotics, but I want them above all, even at the cost of profit or with very little profit, to supply them at prices which the people in this country can afford. If that is not possible, why are they making this and for what purpose?

This is one example I gave. In other companies, in other fields, totally different types of things are being produced, and I should think that one of the objects must be to see that cost of production is brought down, waste is eliminated, profits are increased and economic return are earned so that they can be used for our developmental revenues.

Shri Naushir Bharucha has pleaded the case of overall legislation as far as I can make out, and I am not quite clear yet on this point as to whether that would be a very desirable state of things. I am certainly one with him that parliamentary control over the broad policy should be there. I do not mean control over the day-to-day administration, and I am not one of those people who are saying that the day-to-day administration of these public sector enterprises must be subjected to control by Parliament. It is an impossible, unreal and impracticable thing and no known enterprise can work like that. But in regard to parliamentary control over the broad working of these enterprises also, I must submit that parliamentary control is still in a very-very infantile stage. Shri Naushir Bharucha has expounded on that, and I do not wish to add to what he said. Even if a legislation cannot be introduced immediately in this regard, I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Minister to one aspect. We heard something sometime ago about the recommendations made by the Krishna Menon Committee—a Congress Committee I think—which was set up to go into the question. There was quite a lot of publicity given to it. They recommended that in addition to the Estimates Committee and the Public Accounts Committee, a third Parliamentary Committee should be set up,—a Standing Committee,—which should have a greater degree of broad control over questions of policy and the working of these enterprises. I do not know what has happened to that recommendation, I think it is a good idea and as far as I know, many experts like Prof. Galbraith or Prof. Hanson and all those people have suggested similar things many times.

For instance, in the British Parliament, there is a Select Committee whose specific purpose is to collect facts and information regarding the working of nationalised enterprises. We are told that the British Parliament, as a result of the working of that Select Committee, has got very valuable information at its disposal which enables Parliament to get a much clearer idea of what is going on there. Why cannot we have something like that here?

On the question of managerial administration, I support the views expressed here, and I think that is pretty universally recognised now, namely, that retired civil servants and retired General Managers of railways are not the best people to run these things on a business footing, because they are accustomed to a completely different set-up and a different outlook and different rules and regulations. Of course, the Minister will probably tell us that until we have qualified people we have got to do with them. Therefore, I want to know what is being done to train up technical people. I think the training scheme requires much more attention. There is certainly a very half-hearted approach to the question of training up a specialist cadre who are capable of taking over the administrative posts of these firms. It is not that we always go to retired civil servants. For example, I may refer to the

gentleman who was or is still,—I do not know—the head of this antibiotic plant. I am told he was a barrister and a tubewell expert. He is now making antibiotics. Certainly we need not have a retired civil servant for that.

In the Hindustan Machine Tools at Bangalore, whose record of production has been very good, as Shri Alva* pointed out, very good labour and management relations were being built up. The hon. Minister knows about it. Unfortunately the whole experiment has broken down. You may say that despite that, there is very good production. Let me tell you that that the union representing 99 per cent of the employees was run by people who are incorrigibles like me. Had they not been incorrigibles, production would not have come the way it has come. I will say with all responsibility that in spite of that, the Joint Management Council was sabotaged.

*** *** ***

Of course, there has been no strike there because there are some incorrigible people like me there. It is a public undertaking and it should be protected.

These are the sort of things which should not be allowed to go on. Therefore, I hope the hon. Minister will take many of these things into consideration.

---

* Referring to Shri Joachim Alva, MP

ROLE OF PUBLIC SECTOR ENTERPRISES IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY*

Sir, this Resolution which has been brought forward has already been referred to by some speakers on this side as being very innocuous-looking, but having a different motive behind it. I see on a closer reading of the text of the resolution that it refers, of course, to lesser efficiency and more cost in some of the public sector enterprises than those in the private sector. We should be thankful for small mercies. At least there is an indirect admission here that all public sector enterprises are not necessarily more costly or less efficient than those in the private sector.

I am not concerned for the time being with the question whether the public sector enterprises have any scope for improvement or not, because that is not the purpose of this resolution at all. Therefore, the amendments which have been brought forward by some members suggesting that there should be a committee to go into public sector undertakings in order to improve the efficiency, are quite off the mark. That by itself would be quite a different matter for discussion. The point of this resolution is not that. The point of this resolution is the presupposition that it contains in its very text that the public sector enterprises are less efficient and more costly than the private sector. There is counter-posing here of the two and I would suggest that this resolution is, therefore, something which is more in tune with the general campaign, if I may say so the propaganda campaign, which is carried on in this country, which sometimes assumes very virulent forms and at other times, subsides somewhat, *viz.*, the campaign to run down and denigrate the public sector as far as possible. This resolution as far as I can see, is part of that campaign.

I am reminded, of course strangely enough of what happened a few months ago when these very interests, who are very much concerned to prove that the private sector is superior to the public sector in many ways, were themselves advocating that some of these public sector plants should be thrown open to participation in equity capital by private interests. I cannot understand it; I hope the Mover of the resolution—he is not here—would be able to explain this. If it is pre-supposed that the public sector plants are

* Taking part in the discussion on the Resolution regarding Public Sector Enterprises; *L.S. Deb.*, 18 May 1962.

ipso facto more inefficient and more costly than private sector plants why were these gentlemen coming forward with this demand a little while ago that they should be allowed to participate in the equity capital of some of these public sector undertakings?

Of course, they can put forward certain excuses saying that by their entry into this, by their experience and expert technical knowledge, they would help to improve the working of the public sector. But to my mind, that was not the real reason at all. The real reason is somehow or other to sabotage the working of this public sector. There is also the fact which they are forced to admit in the text of this resolution that some of the public sector undertakings have become profitable after a certain period of running. We know that; we have discussed it many times in this House. Therefore, the general idea seems to be that so long as these public sector undertakings are still in a nascent stage, in the teething stage, let Government bear the brunt and share all the responsibility. Once they get stabilised and begin to earn profits, they would put forward the demand that they should also be allowed to participate in the equity capital of these concerns. I am glad that that move was defeated. It was strongly opposed in this House and the Government, I am glad to say, came forward with the assurance that this participation would not be permitted. This cuts the ground from under the feet of this presupposition, which is made in the resolution itself.

I think we must always bear in mind the essential fundamental difference between the two sectors, though both the sectors are said to be complementary to each other. I suppose that is the philosophy of the Government today. They are saying, we are having a mixed economy; these two sectors are not rival to each other, but they are complementary to each other. Well and good. But they are complementary to each other in a very special sense. That is also true. The basic difference is, we must remember that whereas the resources which are generated by the public sector undertakings go entirely and wholly into the developmental fund of the State, and can be used for planning purposes, that is not the same with the private sector. Everybody knows that a certain amount of profit is mopped up by taxation. But when the private sector attempts to increase its efficiency and lower its costs by various means, I submit, the real motive behind it is not this. It is not as though they are all good Samaritans. The real motive is not that if they can make higher profits they would be able to give more to the Government to help them in planning. The meaning of the drive for more efficiency in the private sector is how they can increase that portion which will not go to the State but which can be pocketed by private interests. That is the drive for efficiency in the private sector. The portion which has to be given up to Government through taxation, etc., is always grudged by them and it is never welcomed by them. There is a constant attempt to see that those taxes are lowered. Their drive for greater

efficiency and lowering of costs means that portion of the profits or the revenue yield of those concerns which could be appropriated by the private owners which they try to increase.

This is the basic difference, and this should be the basic difference in our attitude to the two sectors. There is also one other fact. How is the private sector able to stand today? Without the assistance of the public sector they will find it difficult. These establishments which have been set up in the public sector are of such a type, producing capital goods or rolling-stock for the railways or heavy machines and other type of things which cannot produce quick and easy returns. They are not like a factory for making baby powder, nylon plastic goods or coca cola or something like that. These are not things like that. Everybody knows the economics of these things. This is the type of State capitalism, in our view. Some people may like to call it socialism, but we think it to be a form of State capitalism. In the present conditions of our country we welcome it, because it helps to strengthen the foundation of our national economy.

But, how would the private sector, we ask, whose interests are reflected in this resolution, be able to stand today without the State sector, despite all its limitations? The rolling-stock manufactured there is used for the private sector. The steel manufactured in Rourkela or Bhilai goes nowhere else than to feed their plants. The machine tools which are being produced increasingly and will be produced in the State sector will go to equip some of the private sector plants.

Then, as far as finance goes, I would like an enquiry committee to see what proportion of these private sector firms can operate today without huge loans and grants from the State. That is how they are functioning.

Therefore, my submission is that this resolution should be rejected because it starts with a presupposition which is entirely false.

Lastly, my apprehension is totally in a different direction, that even some firms—I am referring specifically to those *ex*-Mundhra concerns—I fear, after this interim period of Government control which is being exercised over them in order to put things right, are in the danger of being handed back again to the private sector. Such a big scandal took place costing even the job of a very eminent Finance Minister. It became a national scandal. Some of those firms, I am told, are in the danger of being handed back to the private sector. I would like the hon. Minister to set my fears at rest. The British India Corporation, probably the biggest industrial complex in the whole of North India, which has been more or less under Government control so far since Shri Mundhra disappeared from the scene, with about 30 per cent equity capital held by Government and the LIC, we are told, is going to be handed

back to the private sector. Rumours arise that some plan is there to hand this whole British India Corporation complex over to a certain firm of a well known family of private industrialists, to break up the existing board of directors and to bring in all the nominees of that private concern. I think this is the apprehension which should be more lively in the minds of hon. Members. When we have once projected an arm-by 'we' I mean the State—into this privately owned big industrial complex in order to put it on a better footing and run it more efficiently, we should not succumb to any pressure and try to hand it back again to a private concern.

Sir, I oppose this resolution, and I submit that if an enquiry is required at all it should be an enquiry into the private sector of India, what they are doing, how they are carrying on various forms of malpractices, etc.

SELF-RELIANCE IN OIL PRODUCTION*

I am grateful to you for giving me a few minutes. There is only one point to which I would like to focus your attention. It has been referred to, of course, already by a number of speakers. That is the question of the country's quest for new oil resources, indigenous oil resources. I think the Minister will agree that in more senses than one, the national struggle for self-reliance, for economic development and indeed for survival in many spheres, depends now on our ability, on our indigenous talent and resources to speed up and step up at the highest priority possible, the search for oil in our own country.

In this respect, the report of the Ministry has reminded us effectively how critically inadequate our available crude oil supplies are at present. We have got the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) producing a little over 4 million tonnes of crude per annum and the only other producer is Oil India which, according to this report, continues to produce at a steady rate of 3 million tonnes per annum. I would like the Minister to tell us how long this steady rate of 3 million tonnes per annum has been continuing steadily. This has been going for a number of years. There is no increase, no growth at all as far as Oil India is concerned and it should not be put in the report in this way as to give an impression that something very remarkable has been achieved. Therefore, the result will be, as it is stated here, that our requirements of crude oil may go upto 40-43 million tonnes per annum in the next five years whereas we are at present producing only 7 million tonnes indigenously.

The experience which we have recently with the Bombay High off-shore drilling only goes to prove in my opinion that there is plenty of oil in the waters of the surrounding ocean and not only on the West Coast but also, if we set about it, we can find out quite a lot of oil. I am quite sure, on the East Coast of this continental shelf as well, stretching right from Vizag in the South. I would say, right up to Chittagong and Coxs Bazar. There is no reason why we should not have cooperation with Bangladesh in this matter also. Instead of cooperation with our genuine friends, the Government of India is now seeking cooperation for the offshore drilling precisely with those big, multinational foreign oil cartels who are hovering about and anxious to

* Taking part in the discussion on the Demands for Grants-Ministry of Petroleum & Chemicals; *L.S. Deb.*, 18 April 1974.

get into this business. It has been stated here in reply to questions so many times that negotiations are going on; details have not been revealed; perhaps they cannot be revealed at this stage. Even the Sagar Samrat, the mobile off-shore drilling platform, which I don't think, by any modern technological standards, can be considered a very efficient piece of machinery,—we know its background, we know how it ran into a lot of trouble in the beginning and had to undergo modifications, repairs and all that,—but even that, in such a short span of time, has struck oil there, which is at a short distance from the coast of Bombay. Therefore, what I would suggest is that if a Herculean effort is made by the Government, by the Ministry, by the (ONGC), and all available resources of talent, all of our high Indian geologists, geo-physicists, oil scientists, and everybody concerned, there is no reason why this pace of oil exploration cannot be stepped up, quite sharply, I would say. Without that, I fear, we are going to be in for some very serious trouble. As Shri Unnikrishnan* pointed out, to what extent we can rely on alternative sources of energy, particularly coal, is also a matter of research and development in this regard. But I must say I am not very optimistic yet about the Government's plans and proposals.

There is one thing I would say that in our foreign collaboration agreements with foreign companies,—whether they are American, or British, or Japanese or French,—for this off-shore drilling. I would request the Minister to be extremely careful and cautious to see that onerous terms and conditions are not accepted which will do us immense harm in the long run.

It is reported widely in the national and international Press that some of these foreign companies are trying to pressurise the Government to see that if they are brought in with their technology and know-how, etc. for off-shore drilling, they should be allowed to have a share in the equity participation, just as we have had the example of General Motors coming into Hindustan Motors or regarding the Indian Explosives and so on. This should never be allowed. I know the Minister must have read sufficient literature and books on how these multi-national oil corporations, operating in different countries particularly the underdeveloped countries of the third world, have been able to entrench themselves not only in the economy, but leading on from that participation, to stages even where they are in a position to over-throw certain Governments.

Therefore, these onerous terms and conditions of a share in equity participation or a share in oil—a part of the oil which they find must be handed over to them—for export, must be avoided.

---

*Referring to Shri K.P. Unnikrishnan, MP

As far as on-shore drilling is concerned, we have been hearing for such a long time about the possibilities of oil-bearing structures in Tripura, in Assam, in the Gangetic basin of West Bengal and so on. But, we do not seem to be making much progress. And perhaps one of the basic reasons is that we have not got the equipment. I would like to know from the Minister what happened to the plan, or the proposal that there was, for the manufacture of drilling rigs at the Heavy Engineering Corporation's Plant in Ranchi? That, as far as I know has failed completely. Why is it so? Why is it that there is not sufficient measure of coordination between his Ministry, the Ministry of Heavy Industry and other related Ministries to see that, to the extent possible, the resources of the Heavy Engineering Corporation must be utilised to manufacture drilling rigs which we require so badly? Short of it, we will be depending on our equipments, particularly, for our drilling rigs, on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries like Romania, etc. And no other country will give you drilling rigs.

*** *** ***

I would like to know from the Minister, when he replies, what concrete steps have been processed or worked out under the Indo-Soviet Agreement, particularly, for the supply of adequate equipment and drilling rigs which will enable us to step up the pace of our on-shore exploration. I would say this thing that we are not very much satisfied with the attitude that the Government has taken to the very valuable recommendations which were made by the Malaviya Committee on ONGC. I have no hesitation in saying that the very valuable work of that report is, to a large measure, due to its Secretary which, everybody knows. I hope, Shri Borooah* knows the name of Shri Sailesh Ghosh who worked as a Secretary of the Malaviya Committee. He is one of the most knowledgeable persons on oil in this country. And the ONGC had laid down as one of the top priority tasks of the Government for changing the entire structure of the ONGC from top to bottom. It also proposes that there should be a separate Ministry of Oil Exploration and under that the whole structure of the ONGC should be revamped and reorganised from top to bottom. Revamping, as I understand it, basically means, change of bureaucrats from top to bottom. Shri K.P. Unnikrishnan gave some examples. I do not want to multiply them. The kind of gentlemen sitting in this vital position in the whole apparatus should be replaced by technical people, by the people who are knowledgeable in this particular specific field of oil and petroleum, who knows something about it. I do not know your new Secretary. I do not have the pleasure of his acquaintance but, I want to know why should a Secretary of your Ministry—an oil technocrat—not be a person who has, over the years, acquired expertise, knowledge and experience in this

*Referring to Shri Dev Kant Borooah, the then Union Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals.

specific field? Why should he always be a general administrator and a bureaucrat? Therefore, I would say that in our country we have got enough talent. We have got enough young people, good geo-physicists, geologists, scientists and oil people to whom one should boldly give responsibility in this period of challenge, if you want the country to really come out of this deadlock and take radical steps in the field of oil—our own oil.

One of the most tragic things is that even after 27 years of Independence we are producing only 7 million tonnes of oil per year and we found ourselves in such a hopelessly vulnerable position when the fuel crisis overtook the world. We were at the mercy of others. Whether it is oil or coal, we have not developed our own resources. This basic aspect of our development has been so tragically neglected that now when catastrophe has overtaken the entire world, our country—however big it is with its vast population—finds itself in this respect absolutely vulnerable and weak. This is my final appeal to the Minister that the whole set-up of ONGC must be re-organised from top to bottom and good technologists—our own people who are technocrats in this line—should boldly be permitted and given responsibility. Energetic plans should be taken up with the help from whatever friendly country or friendly agency is available, who will supply us necessary equipment and know-how without demanding onerous terms and conditions which are against our national interest, to make a real breakthrough in the next five years so that we are able to tap these resources and gradually become self-reliant and overcome this kind of dependence on foreign powers and foreign companies.

ON THE DISINVESTMENT POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT*

I am seeking to raise a discussion on the question of the Government's disinvestment policy and the functioning of the Disinvestment Commission. I gather that Shri Arun Jaitley has very recently been empowered by the Minister of Finance to pay special attention to this question of disinvestment. The possible reason for it may be that Government is now anxious for this disinvestment process to be extended not only to Public Sector Undertakings but to joint ventures also. Up to now, disinvestment of shares in Public Sector Undertakings was proceeding at quite a fast pace but it appears that the Government is not satisfied. They want the whole process to be further expedited. Not only expedited but also they wanted it to encompass a much broader field of activity.

As I mentioned just now, the reports are that Shri Arun Jaitley is entrusted with the job of seeing that not only the Public Sector Undertakings but also joint ventures in which the Public Sector is a partner along with the private sector should also be brought within the compass of this disinvestment.

For example, there are companies like Maruti. There is Indian Airlines. There is Steel Authority of India. There are so many other joint ventures. All these, up to now, have been kept out of the area of disinvestment. But I apprehend now that after so many years of working, the Government is eager to step up the pace of disinvestment and to see that more and more Public Sector Undertakings, including joint ventures, are brought within this compass of disinvestment. I would not name the paper. One newspaper which is very kindly disposed towards the private sector has also approvingly commented that Shri Jaitley is just the right person for this job.

Sir, the Disinvestment Commission was set up in 1991, that is, eight years ago, a pretty long time. I should just point out that the Government announced that disinvestment is something which the Finance Minister has spelt out a number of times in both the Houses and outside the Parliament also.

As far as we have understood it, the Government's intention—though we do not agree with it at all—was that fairly large sums of money which are

* Raising a matter for discussion under Rule 193; *L.S. Deb.*, 16 December, 1999.

locked up or tied up in the capital holdings of public sector enterprises should be made available. For what?

Firstly, they should be made available in order to help them to see that the Government's own funds are further strengthened and replenished by diverting this money from the public sector units to strengthen the Government Budget.

Secondly, they said that there are some non-strategic Public Sector Undertakings which are running at losses should be strengthened. We wish to use this money for the purpose of strengthening of those units, and we will see that this money is used in order to bring out some viable plans and schemes for strengthening these weaker units and give them a better chance to function properly and efficiently.

Shri Yashwant Sinha was speaking on the 13th of December, in the other House on the same subject. He has stated:

> "That the Government has decided that in the generality of the cases, the Government's shareholding in public sector enterprises will be brought down to 26 per cent, (which means the minority shareholding and the majority shareholding will not be any longer held by the Government)."

The second point which I made was that this is contradictory. In the cases of public sector enterprises inviting speedy consideration, the Government will continue to retain the majority of shareholding. Just before this, he has said that in the case of these Government enterprises, the shares holding should be brought down to 26 per cent. He says just after that:

> "In the cases of public sector enterprises inviting speedy consideration, the Government will continue to retain the majority of shareholding."

I think, this question should be clarified by the hon. Minister when he replies as to what exactly the Minister of Finance meant by this.

I am still quoting Shri Yashwant Sinha. The third point he made was that the interests of the workers will be protected in all cases. Of course, the actual practice that is going on is very contrary to this. Numerous cases are being raised in the House during Question Hour, during Zero Hour, and through Matters under Rule 377. The hon. Members are citing instances of so many of these public sector enterprises where the workers' interests, far from being protected, are being very much sacrificed. They are being subjected even to non-payment of wages for several months. The Government's strategy towards public sector enterprises will continue to encompass a judicious mix of strengthening these strategic units and privatising the non-strategic units.

Privatising non-strategic units through gradual disinvestment and all strategic sales and devising a viable rehabilitation strategy for weaker units are the scheme.

This is what the Finance Minister has said. He has mentioned later on:

> "Strategic sale means sale of some strategic units to strategic parties who are willing to buy them. The difference between disinvestment and strategic sale is that when we undertake a strategic sale, we hand over the management to the strategic partners."

So, this is a plan which includes general selling of shares to the public. It also includes selling out of joint ventures. It also includes strategic sale, meaning that not only sale of the equity but even transfer of the management may be made to the strategic partners who are willing to persist in this sale. So, it is a very broad compass and under these different heads, we would like to know from the Government, how many different undertakings they have tried to dispose of under these various heads.

We are, of course, completely opposed to this policy because this is another name for dismantling and demolishing the whole structure of the public sector which has been built up over so many years, costing thousands of crores of the people's money. The public sector in the industrial field, has played a very vital and strategic part in strengthening our whole industrial infrastructure and in providing this country's economic sinews that much of the strength which it was lacking until the public sector came into play. Disinvestment may be a polite word, but actually what it amounts to is demolishing the public sector and taking out one by one important public sector units and transferring them to the private sector. But the Government does not say like that. They are not frank enough to admit what the whole game is behind this policy. We are totally opposed to this and I wish to emphasise the fact that earlier on when this Disinvestment Policy first started, it was stated that only part of the money, which would be received from the sale of the shares, would go into what was called the Disinvestment Fund. That was one of the main recommendations which had been made. It was said that ten per cent of the proceeds realised from the sale of shares would be put into this Disinvestment Fund. The first Report of the Disinvestment Commission which was submitted in February, 1977, in fact, said that this Disinvestment Fund could be utilised by the Government to replace the budgetary support which is supposed to come from the budget to various units. Often it is not given on the plea that there are no budgetary resources with which to help these individual units. The Disinvestment Commission had proposed that the Disinvestment Fund created within the sale proceeds of the companies' shares and transferred to the private sector, should be used

for the purpose of giving budgetary support to units which were urgently in need of that.

As far as I am aware, there are no examples of the budgetary support being given to public sector units out of this Disinvestment Fund because as far as I know, this Disinvestment Fund has existed only on paper; this has not come into actual operation.

Then, the tenure of this Disinvestment Fund itself has ended on the 30th November this year.

It was working upto 30th November, 1999. But, after that the Government had disinvested the Disinvestment Commission. The Disinvestment Commission no longer exists. It has been allowed to lapse as it were. Before it lapsed, it had submitted some 12 Reports to the Government. We do not know the fate of those Reports. In many of them, the Disinvestment Commission had suggested that instead of large scale selling of shares, what should be done was to work out some viable schemes for strengthening the weaker units for giving them the possibility of restructuring, for improving their technology, improving their management and thereby reducing the budgetary deficits from which they suffer.

Also, the hon. Minister of Finance himself had claimed that a part of these proceeds from the sale of public sector shares would be used by the Government for what he has called the social sector. In fact, in one case he had stated that this money would be used for construction of houses, construction of roads, supply of water to rural areas and so on for this kind of social purposes would also be one of the objectives of this budgetary exercise. However, I believe that due to inter-Ministerial difficulties and inter-Ministerial rivalries, there being a number of Ministers who are supposed to look after this disinvestment sector, there are difficulties. Technically, of course, the Finance Ministry is the boss, as it were. But other Ministries are also involved—either those which are directly concerned with the particular industry with which that enterprise is concerned or which are concerned with export and import. They were being looked after by different Ministries. This has led to a number of differences among them which have prevented effective action being taken.

As far as I am aware, disinvestment has actually been carried out in 39 public sector enterprises and from 1991-92 to 1999-2000, the amount which has been received by the Government through disinvestment of Central Public Sector Undertakings is Rs. 18,288 crore, nearly Rupees two hundred thousand crore. This is what they have received. How has this money been used? Except by saying that it has been credited to the Consolidated Fund of India, there is no further information available as to the breakup of this expenditure.

Everything goes to the Consolidated Fund of India. That we know. But what about the breakup of this money? How much of it was spent on reviving the sick or weak units by improving their management, giving them better technology and other methods? How much of it was used for paying off of workers who were supposed to take the so-called voluntary retirement and leave their service and go? That is also included in this. How much was spent on what are called the social benefits or bringing about social improvements in the social sector?

These things have not been either spelt out or told to the country or the House. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister about these details.

Then Sir, there is a seeming contradiction. The Finance Minister's statement in the other House that the Government's shareholding would be reduced to 26 per cent does not make any sense. That means the Government wants, in all these holdings in all these public sector enterprises, to become a minority shareholder. What is the meaning of it? I am not able to follow. If it is so, it is a very dubious matter. It means that the Government is actually liquidating its holdings in the public sector and demitting the whole thing to the private sector because he has said elsewhere, as I have quoted a little bit earlier, that the Centre would also be holding a majority of shares in what are called the strategic units. There is a difference between what they say are losing units, the units which have been making financial losses for a long period—these can be sold. But there will be nobody to buy them—and those units which have been running in profits. These units may command a good share price in the market, but why should they be sold since they are showing a good performance and getting high profit?

The rehabilitation of weaker units, non-strategic units, is one of the declared aims. I suggest that it has not been done at all. If anything has been done, we would like to know some instances, some examples from the Minister. What are the units where they have gone in for this kind of a viable rehabilitation of the weaker units? I would like to know whether sale of units in sectors like oil, petroleum, power and so on, which are strategic, certainly by any means, include the question of handing over the management of these units to the strategic partners assuming that the people who are willing to buy shares in these sectors are also not domestic purchasers, but international purchasers, which means foreign companies. They have not procured it. They are also included as bidders for the purchase of shares and if they buy a sizeable quantity of shares, the Government's policy is to allow them to also become partners in the management. That is a very far-reaching step, the Government is intending to take.

There was a discussion the other day, Sir, and, I think, the Power Minister was involved about a reported move of the National Thermal Power

Corporation (NTPC) to take over all the shares of the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (NHPC). Both are public sector enterprises and both of them are operating in this very strategic sector of power. We know that the power requirements in this country are also growing all the time and they are not able to meet the requirements at present by their installed capacity. So, the Government is very much interested in seeing that the capacity to generate more power is increased substantially, but the method for doing this, which appears to be under consideration, is for one of them to buy up all the shares of the other. This is a curious method. Of course, it was denied here by the Power Minister who said that no such decision had been taken yet. He did not deny whether it was under consideration or not.

He said that the matter was still being considered, but no final decision had been taken. This is one of the options, and his option is this one. Just recently, although the Finance Minister, on the floor of the House, very strenuously denied that it amounted to privatisation, we have had the example of the two insurance corporations, the LIC and the GIC, into which entry of the private sector has now been permitted by a Bill which has been introduced recently in Parliament. Though the Bill has not been passed yet, the idea is that in these two very old, very traditional, very well established and very well performing public sector corporations in the field of insurance, which cannot possibly be accused of either being inefficient or running in losses, they are going to allow the private sector to come in. Even though it is argued that since their total holding capacity of shares will be limited and they will not be able to hold more than the ceiling, but anyway, this is a very-very important step that they are taking which is, in our opinion, a signal to the foreign investors abroad, and it was meant to be that they should be encouraged to come and invest in our country because these were two sectors where the foreign insurance companies were very-very anxious and eager to be able to enter for the sake of making higher profits. This was being strenuously objected and opposed by different sections of public opinion in this country, not only by trade unions. There is a wrong impression sought to be created that on this insurance question, there was a dispute between the workers' unions and the company management. That is not so. The point is that in the case of the insurance companies, allowing foreign capital to come into these two sectors would change the whole balance of capital holding in this country, and would lead to a very massive fall, I should say, in public sector performance and investments.

Then, Sir, another example I would like to just briefly mention is the Gas Authority of India. The Gas Authority of India is one of the so-called *Navratnas*. It is competent according to the Government's own reports which I was looking at. They say that it is professionally managed, very efficiently managed; it is a competent company and it has made a net profit this year

of Rs. 1,060 crore. The Disinvestment Commission to whom this Gas Authority of India was referred—I do not know as to why it was referred—recommended that Rs. 21,000 crore worth of shares of the Gas Authority of India may be placed in the domestic and the international markets for purchasers who might be interested in buying, mainly they would be international purchasers. So, after that, this has happened very recently, we would like to know as to what is the strategic move that the Government has undertaken by putting both these very flourishing and efficient public sector companies on to the bargaining table of the Disinvestment Commission.

Twenty-five per cent of the shares, I am told, of the Gas Authority of India are already being sought to be purchased by two companies which are themselves the competitors of the Gas Authority of India.

One is ENRON in the State of Maharashtra, the other is the British Gas Company. Both these international companies which are very, very strong and powerful multinationals have expressed their desire to get into this field and to buy upto 25 per cent shares of the Gas Authority of India. What is the reason for it, why it should be permitted, we do not understand because the Government itself admits that the Gas Authority of India is a highly efficient and professional company which has been doing extremely well and is meeting the requirements of the community.

So, everything, as I see at present, the original objectives—the original strategy behind this Disinvestment Policy, as stated eight years or seven years ago by the then Finance Minister—do not hold good any more. The aims for which this was introduced are now being replaced by the kind of a panicky move by the Government to sell out as quickly as they can so that the public sector companies in these important fields are replaced as soon as possible by private sector companies who are willing to come in and make profits. In fact, the market is being sold out. The market is being sold out and this is a part of the policy of the present Government; this is a part of the re-structuring New Economic Policy which is being followed for the last few years and which we have opposed strenously and we shall continue to oppose. It is because actually it will mean that ultimately everything would be sold out.

*** *** ***

Sir, just now when I was coming to the House I met a friend who told me—I do not know the source of his information, he told me that he would meet me later on and tell me—that there is a move afoot on the part of the Government.

Privatisation of banks, anyhow are on the anvil. Already there are so many private banks and foreign banks functioning in this country. We know, lately there has been a Committee's Report advising that more public sector

banks should be privatised. But what my friend was telling me was that there is a move now and there is canvassing going on for allowing foreign private sector to come into the retail trade in this country. Retail trade in this country will also be allowed to be penetrated by foreign capital. I do not know whether this is correct or not.

Sir, I suppose, we have one of the most flourishing private retail businesses in India which are manned, owned and controlled by our own people. There is nothing wrong with them. But if this is a move which is just as a parallel move going on to introduce foreign capital into the print media in this country—which is also being strenously opposed by all media people and non-media people—and if the newspapers, the Press, the retail business, the insurance business everything is to be handed over to the foreign capital, then, I do not know, where will we be left at the end of another couple of years?

Sir, therefore, in the polite name of disinvestment what is taking place is actually selling out of the entire business of this country to the private sector, to the foreign parties who are certainly not coming here out of any intention of charity or love towards us but purely in order to make money and augment their profits. It is a matter of shame that this Government which earlier on, many of stalwarts of this Party, were talking about *Swadeshi*, I do not know, if they still adhere to that objective of *Swadeshi* or not. They are, in any case, a party now to all these moves.

Sir, my friend, Shri Ram Naik is sitting here and he, of course, will also throw some light on this question as to why they are so eager to sell out everything in this country to the foreign parties and foreign business interests.

Sir, therefore, I am totally opposed to this whole Disinvestment Policy, it is a cloak to hide what is actually the real motive of the Government and what is going on. Therefore, I would urge the House to be vigilant, to keep a vigilant eye on the movements of this Government and to resist, with all possible means, these moves to privatise everything in this country and hand the resources of this country over to foreign parties who are eager to get in.

GENERAL BUDGET AND THE COMMON MAN*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Finance Minister has been congratulated by members of his own party mainly and by—I find from the Press during the last few days—certain sections of big business which is rather a curious combination on the face of it but really not very curious for the so-called realistic budget which he has placed and the so-called concessions which he has given to the ordinary man.

Sir, there are many things to be said but with the limited time at one's disposal I can only concentrate on a few points. The Finance Minister has concealed in my opinion three fundamental features which are the background of the present capitalist system in which we are functioning. He has avoided any reference to it and put forward certain proposals as if they are in a vacuum. I would like to point out that these background features are basic to the whole situation and it is upon them that will depend the actual impact and outcome of all these budget proposals.

The first thing—I hope you will not say later that you have a fixation about these things—is that we are living in a class society and not in an egalitarian society. We are living in a class society. According to the National Council of Applied Economic Research figures, they say the top 1 per cent of house-holds in this country own 14 per cent of the national wealth while the bottom 50 per cent of the house-holds together own less than 7 per cent of the national wealth. It is just an indication of the disparity which exists in our country. If you split this up between the rural and urban sector, we find in the rural sector the bottom 50 per cent of the households are owning 8.2 per cent of the wealth while the top 1 per cent are holding 13 per cent of the wealth. The bottom 50 per cent of people in the urban sector altogether hold 3.2 per cent of the wealth whereas the top 1 per cent hold 20 per cent of the wealth. This is enough to point out that there is a very high degree of concentration of wealth in this country. That has to be borne in mind when any budget is prepared and the budget proposals are made.

The question is whether the fiscal and the monetary instrument which the budget is supposed to be, should aim or should not aim at attacking, to the extent it can, this concentration which is there. I think nobody can deny

* Participating in the discussion on the General Budget, 1980-81; *L.S. Deb.*, 27 June 1980.

it. I feel this budget, that the hon'ble Minister has introduced has run away from this basic issue and by running away or avoiding this issue it really has surrendered all along the line.

Sir, the second basic feature is that a period in which there is—which is not peculiar to India only—inflation, run-away inflation and a period of high prices constitute a boom for the private corporate sector. This is a fact. It can be established by figures from any of the countries which are suffering from this type of high inflation. Sir, it is wrong to think that inflation is something which inflicts suffering on all sections of the people. It does not at all. It is strange to find, Sir, that precisely during this period of high prices, of inflation, of shortages, of negative national income growth, of trade deficit, of stagnation, of drought, of political turmoil,—in such a situation also—you will find, according to the Reserve Bank of India study of 1978-79, which is a study made of 421 selected public limited companies—private companies, not government companies—which shows that during this period, profits have risen by 33.3 per cent and dividend payments have risen by 15 per cent over the previous year. There are other estimates: one is the estimate prepared by the *Economic Times*, on the basis of 215 selected companies. It shows that precisely in this period, the pre-tax profit of these 215 companies rose by 50.9 per cent against 25.5 per cent in the previous year. So, is it not a strange feature that while we are bemoaning the fate that such an economic crisis is there in our country, it is precisely in this period, that you find higher sales in the private corporate sector, higher profit, higher dividend, higher rate of formation of assets,—all taking place in a period of negative growth, and of stagnation, of deficit, and so on?

I know that big business people will never be satisfied with what they get. And you will find in the newspapers every day, Sir, that they are blowing hot and cold; they continue to moan and wail and say that they are still suffering from so many difficulties and the Minister has not been considerate enough to them and so on and so forth. One day the share market goes up; the other day it comes down; we know how all these things are manipulated. What I say is this, that the budget has ignored a reality, which is that the victims of inflation the world over are those people who have got fixed income, ordinary working people, small farmers, those who are below the poverty line and so on. Yes. They are the victims of inflation. But there are certain people who are gaining from inflation; the gainers from inflation are those who are in a position to manipulate production, manipulate stocks, manipulate markets, manipulate prices, manipulate their own product-mix, manipulate their balance-sheets. It is these sections of people who are favoured—the affluent sections,—by inflation. You will find throughout the world, in United States, and other countries, which are far ahead of us, as capitalist development goes, in those countries too, the inflation which is

taking place, is hitting certain sections of the people, but there are other sections who are prosperous precisely as a result of those high prices and inflation. These things have no reflection in Shri Venkataraman's* budget at all. Therefore the first spontaneous reaction which came on the day of the budget has been this. Shri Goenka's *Indian Express* said this. I am only taking the headings of the editorials written on the very next day. Shri Goenka's *Indian Express* gave the heading 'Well done'. Shri Tata's *Statesman* gave the heading 'Well begun'. In Shri Birla's *Hindustan Times* the heading was 'A Pleasant surprise'. In Shri Sahu Jain's *Times of India* the heading was 'An Imaginative Budget'. And Shri K.N. Mody of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry says: 'A realistic budget'. These are the types of spontaneous reactions which were there, which reveals their true feelings. Because, Sir, the main philosophy behind the Budget, is to maintain the *status quo*. It is a *status quo* budget. There are no indications of direction in it. I do not say one single budget in a year can bring about a very radical change. But some perspective should be there; some direction should be there; Now, the question is whether we want to go towards some kind of structural changes in the economy. Some Hon. Member of the ruling party on the opposite side was speaking the other day. I am glad to hear him say that for so many years we have been functioning on the basis of what we call mixed economy. Is it not high time that we reviewed the whole position and came to some conclusion as to where this so called mixed economy has brought us, why this economic crisis has become so over-whelming, why the poor people are becoming poorer, why the people below the poverty line are increasing in number? Why the number of destitute people from the villages coming into the towns, is growing? This is all I heard from a member on the opposite benches sitting yesterday. The question raised is: whether the budget is an instrument or not to go to some perspective or some structural changes? I say that the budget is nothing of the kind. Its main philosophy is to maintain the *status quo*.

Take the step-up which is proposed in the Plan outlay. A very good thing that the Plan outlay is to be increased because without that there can be no growth. The step-up proposed is 16.6 per cent. But, Sir, the Minister himself has pointed out that over the last one year the price-rise has been of the order of 20 per cent. So, a 16.6 per cent step-up in Plan outlay means that it does not even cover that price-rise which has taken place in the last one year and, therefore, in real terms what is prescribed is really a negative growth rate. It is not a provision for any growth at all because it does not allow for this 20 per cent rise in price which has taken place. The real financial step-up is thus washed out because of the reliance on monetary measures, not on fiscal measures, if I may say so. It is just an *ad hoc* way of undertaking certain

*Referring to Shri R. Venkataraman, the then Union Minister of Finance.

monetary measures. Of course, I congratulate Shri Venkataraman for his intelligence. He is a clever man, no doubt. He knows how to do a certain amount of window dressing; some window-dressing has been done. Some kind of populist veneer has been sought to be put on this budget which, of course, immediately provoked loud table thumping and applause from his party members. I do not think they really understood at that moment the implications of the budget because the blow which was being struck this time was sought by our Finance Minister to be muffled, to be muffled somewhat, by a certain amount of window dressing. The entire emphasis, you will find, is really on public management of infrastructure. He has said so himself. He is relying on that and on a more efficient tax administration. But even within this infrastructural compass, I must say, the public distribution system which all of us in this country consider to be absolutely basic and vital, as a better distribution system, does not really stand out as a major landmark.

Look at the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission—I do not mean disrespect to anybody—has been reduced, as it is at present reduced, to an advisory body of certain ex-Secretaries. That is the present composition of the Planning Commission. It does not have that kind of weight and that kind of prestige, which is necessary to make the Planning Commission a really meaningful pressure group within this whole system, economic system of planning. The public sector cannot be made a paying proposition, unless a rationalised pricing and subsidy policy is introduced. I am disappointed to find that there is no discussion in depth about this question. At present the public sector is serving as the handmaid of the private sector. Its main purpose is to serve the interests of the big business sector. An infrastructure to the tune of Rs. 5,000 crore has been invested in it at a return of only 4 per cent and the pricing and subsidy policy is such that the public sector cannot do anything but show losses.

Take for example the State Trading Corporation, which will supply raw material at a cheap rate to the private sector. But the prices of the finished commodities which are made out of these raw materials are fixed by the private sector at its own sweet will. What is this? Is this the job of the public sector?

Now limits have been imposed on the equity conversion clause. This, of course, has been enthusiastically welcomed by the corporate sector. What it means is that the private sector will prosper more than it was doing with money from the public sector without the fear that these loans may be converted into equity because a bar has been put that the financial institutions and banks will not be able to buy up more than forty per cent of shares in those companies where they have invested their money.

Black money is sought to be brought out only by better compliance on the part of tax-payers. He is going back to the old philosophy which we had at the time of the voluntary disclosure scheme that if you reduce the marginal rate of direct taxes, *i.e.* income tax, the tax payers will voluntarily come forward to pay tax honestly and evasion of taxes will go down. I do not think that is correct. This is rather a wishful thinking; it is not borne out by experience either. I have no time to indicate the figures that I have compiled from 1970-71 to date; these figures show how the movement of maximum rate of income tax has moved along with the percentage increase in the receipt of income tax year by year. I am afraid, experience does not bear that out. In some years when the marginal rate of income tax was high, the receipts were good and in some years when the marginal rate of income tax went down, the receipts fell; they did not rise. We, all know what happened with the voluntary disclosure scheme which had to be given up eventually. It was proved that this scheme did not succeed at all. In our country, even if you reduce the taxes there are large number of people with plenty of money who are not willing to cooperate and not willing to pay taxes even at a lower level; they will try to evade whatever may happen. Therefore, you should not rely on this so much.

Then, the concessions in direct taxes, which have been made, are all a bonanza for the rich people and better-off people. There is no doubt about it. And, there is some window dressing because the exemption limit in respect of income tax has now been raised from Rs. eight thousand to Rs. twelve thousand. It is very good, but there are two points which were concealed at that time and did not come out. One was that if you are earning more than Rs. twelve thousand, the exemption limit for calculation of income tax will continue to be Rs. eight thousand, not twelve thousand. The only people who gained are very small in number, those earnings between Rs. eight thousand and twelve thousand. If you are earning, say Rs. thirteen thousand, you have still to pay tax on the basis of exemption of Rs. eight thousand and not Rs. twelve thousand. That is one point. The second point is that persons earning more than Rs. twelve thousand were earlier getting certain benefit by way of educational allowance for the children. That educational allowance has been removed. I hope he will look into this. This is not such a major thing which he should be rigid about. This educational allowance for two children which was provided for earlier, after raising the limit to Rs. twelve thousand, has been done away with. That is why I am referring to it as window dressing without meaning any personal disrespect to anybody.

Then, the limit for wealth tax exemption has been raised from Rs. one lakh to Rs. one and a half lakh. I do not know, why. What is the necessity for it? The wealth tax on agricultural land has been totally abolished. He, of course, got the loudest applause in this House when he announced this. And I was

not surprised at that, seeing the composition of that party. Successful sabotaging of tax has been done. He himself admitted that we were not able to get more than Rs. one crore for this. That means evasion was going on and since we could not realise more than Rs. one crore, it was better to do away with it altogether.

Then, there is a seven-year tax holiday for new industries; additional fifty per cent depreciation for new units, customs duty on imported capital goods and raw materials which are meant for certain industries has been heavily slashed. These are all concessions which can benefit only a small group in this country, that is the organised private corporate sector. Not one paise of extra direct tax has been levied on the corporate sector. This is so, except for that 7 per cent tax on the interest on bank borrowings. I do not know why this roundabout way has been taken. He could as well have raised the deposit rate by 1 per cent. It would have benefited everybody and produced the same result. Borrowings from banks would have become expensive by more than 1 per cent; but depositors would have been given more interest. Instead of this a $7^1/_2$ per cent tax on interest will only increase the cost of loans, without giving any corresponding incentives to depositors.

As regards resource mobilization which he has planned for, I do not know why it is being spoken repeatedly that the new levies will bring in Rs. 233 crore. In a full year, it will not bring in only Rs. 233 crore. Rs. 233 crore are only for the rest of this year. If you calculate for a full year of 12 months the additional levies that have been imposed will bring in an additional income to the Government, of Rs. 445 crore, *i.e.* within the framework of the budget. Outside the budget—everybody has spoken about it—we have the Rs. 2100 crore from petroleum products, Rs. 665 crore from fertilizers, Rs. 290 crore from the Railways, Rs. 27 crore from the P&T, Rs. 850 crore to be taken as foreign loans, most of it from the International Monetary Fund, and about Rs. 100 crore to be taken from institutional funds.

Cutting out the last one, the total impact cannot be seen only from the point of view of excise duties. The whole thing has to be taken into account, the whole thing is the burden which is definitely going to stoke the fire of inflation; and nobody can prevent it.

The price rise is inevitable. We are living in a society where you may calculate mathematically and say that the rise will be only 6.5 paise. Every time this exercise is gone through. The officials and bureaucrats of the Ministry—whether of the Railways or of Finance—hold Press Conferences and say that according to their calculations, there will be only a 2-paise or 0.005 paise rise per rupee. But we are living in a society where we have no control over the trade and industry. They are never prepared to absorb even

the smallest rise in their profits. They will always see to it that that burden, or more than that burden, is passed on to the consumer. Every year we see this.

Actually, the impact of new levies is tremendous and huge. Even after that, the uncovered gap which remains, is Rs. 1417 crore. We are in for another round of heavy inflation. It means there is going to be a big increase in the Reserve Bank of India credit. It is inevitable. It means that they will print more notes. They will have to do it. More money will be pumped into circulation.

The Finance Minister never dealt with it in this budget and said how this problem of huge and fantastic rise in the money circulation over the last few years is going to be reduced, or checked.

We must remember that all this is taking place on top of a 16-month continuous price rise. Maybe it is due to the Janata rule. He may be inclined to use that argument. But I have shown earlier—I have no time to do it now—that all these basic factors were in operation before the Janata Party came to power. Some of them got accentuated or aggravated during the Janata rule, I have no doubt. But these basic features of money and credit expansion were going on from long before. This time this budget is coming on the peak of a period when we have already had a 16-month continuous price rise, with an annual inflation rate of 20 per cent and a reckless expansion of money supply during the last $4^1/_2$ years. In such a period, if you bring forward a budget like this with huge budgeting for new levies and burdens, then, I am afraid, we are going to be in for a real disaster. There was some kind of a so-called soft budget, if you call this a soft budget in 1976 also before the Janata Government, but that soft budget, if you call it soft, was preceded at that time by a comparatively long period, several months at least, of comparative price stability. At the end of that period, a period of comparative price stability, at that time, in 1976, your so-called soft budget was brought forward. That gave concessions to certain people. But to do it now I should think is gambling with fate; if we do it now, when we are on the crest of a period of 20 per cent inflation rate, with the highest price rise that we have been having for such a long time, this can only presage a new inflationary upsurge.

Lastly, I would like to deal with the so-called relief in excise duty concessions which have been tom-tommed as though a very big relief has been given to the ordinary man, the consumer. First of all, the total concessions which are promised do not come to more than Rs. 15 crore; Rs. 15 crore are in a full year. It is the value of the concessions which are being given, but he has not pointed out I think, in all fairness, he should have educated the members of this House that while excise only has been reduced on certain

commodities, the special excise duty of 5 per cent, which was there on all items, is being extended even to items which were not covered before; and on those items which were already covered by 5 per cent, special excise, it is being raised from 5 per cent to 10 per cent. There are very few exemptions. This special excise duty is going to bring in nearly Rs. 200 crore in spite of the relief in certain exemptions given on certain items, because special excise is taking care of the rise. For example, in this matter, 30 basic drugs have been exempted from the general excise duty, but here again, there is some window dressing, because I find that these 30 basic drugs were hitherto subject not to the normal excise duty; they were already subject to a concessional excise duty of 2.5 per cent. That is what they were paid. It is true that now this 2.5 per cent has been withdrawn, but if you work it out you will find that it will mean a very marginal fall. I could have understood if he had abolished 12.5 per cent duty which is there on all patent medicines and proprietary medicines. That would give real relief to the ordinary man who goes to a chemist shop to buy his patent medicines which have been prescribed for him. On those, there is a 12.5 per cent duty. That is not touched. And 30 drugs were selected which are also paying only a concessional rate of 2.5 per cent. There will be a very small marginal reduction in those medicines. Some vital sectors will be badly hit. Textile is one. By textile; I do not mean cotton textile, because it seems to me that some pressure from the cotton lobby has worked this time. There seems to be some reliance on the hope that the cotton crop will be good. I do not know, if it fails, if the crop is poor, what may happen. But what has happened is that artificial fibre, viscous staple fibre, has been badly affected, of course, by the petroleum hike; and we will find that the prices of indigenously made staple fibre are going to become higher than the cost of the imported fibre. That will be the net result of all this. Apart from the fact that many of the textile mills in the recent years have switched over to oil fired boilers, boilers which are running in their mills are stoked by oil. The whole petroleum crisis and the hike is going to affect one big section of the textile industry. I am not shedding very much tears about that because the common man in this country is not able to afford fabrics made out the artificial staple fibre at all. That is far beyond his reach. I believe, all these things are used for export purposes in order to earn a lot of foreign exchange. Now the only beneficiaries in this competition will of course be the cotton lobby and the cotton lobby may gain as a result of it. I do not know how it fits in with the whole logic of increasing our export earnings and earning foreign exchange.

As far as steel is concerned, I am sure, these higher freight rates of the Railways are not going to be absorbed by the steel units. They are demanding a rise in price. I find this in the papers. The cement manufacturers are already demanding a higher retention price for cement. They are not going to absorb

any of these freight rates. Everything is to be passed on to the consumer. Cement is in short supply, not available even in the black market. One cannot get it.

As far as road transport is concerned, because diesel price has gone up, the price of tyres has gone up almost immediately after the budget. Firestone have announced hike in the price of tyres. Not only rail transport, but road transport is going up steeply, which means it will be reflected in the price of all commodities which have to be carried either by rail or by road.

I have gone through the speech very carefully. The Finance Minister has given the slogan of 'growth with social justice'. But I find neither growth nor social justice in that. There is no social justice in this. What is going to happen is that a much bigger burden than ever before is going to be imposed on the shoulders of the average common man due to its cumulative effect on all these imposts. I do not want to repeat what other people have already said. It is only a trick—because of railway freight and petroleum prices and all these things. They are not coming within the scope of the budget technically. The budget taken by itself says to the people—look I have reduced the burden of the new imposts and it will only be Rs. 225 crore, which is not correct. In a full year it will be Rs. 445 crore. But people are not going to do counting like that. They are concerned with the whole package which has been delivered by the Government over the last few days. Therefore this is a budget which is basically a budget, which gives concessions as I said in the very beginning, to those people who alone are the gainers from inflation and high prices. High cost economy brings gain and profit to the organised corporate private sector and it is that *status quo* which is sought to be preserved by Shri Venkataraman's budget, while imposing all the burdens I should say, crippling burdens, crushing burdens on those very sections of the people who are always the losers from inflation, who have no means to combat inflation, who are always the worst victims of inflation. What I wish to say in regard to the socio-economic structural changes that are required is this. I do not want to use any phrase or jargon for which I will be accused of being doctrinaire or dogmatic; should I say in the gentle language used by some members of his party that this is mixed economy? There is some prescription in it like in any mixture, any medicine which the doctor prescribes. In a mixture, we have to consider what are the different ingredients which go into that mixture. In our mixed economy of this public sector and private sector and so on, is it not time that we made an honest assessment of where we have come in all these years, and how far this public sector is public and how far has it been serving only as a handmaid of the private sector? What is the condition of the private sector? Study the figures of their assets and see how their asset formation has gone up throughout this period in the last 10 years from 1970 onwards. That will cover the period of the earlier Congress regime,

Janata regime and post-Janata regime. Take all the top business houses and see how, while the people are suffering and are having to go through the worst possible privations, the assets of these top houses have grown by leaps and bounds every year. How is it taking place? There is no magic or mystery behind it. The whole system is devised in such a way that the wealth of this country is being funnelled, being diverted to these people and they are in a position to control the strategic heights of the economy. It is not the public sector which is controlling the strategic heights. It is these big business houses with their hold and grip on the various parts of the economy who are able to dictate terms to the Government now and they are getting away with it. This budget does nothing but reflect that. It is no use saying that Chaudhary Charan Singh had increased certain excise duties and you are reducing the same. To the extent that you are reducing something which he increased naturally people will feel relieved and I am prepared to congratulate you also to that extent, though he has protested and said you have made some wrong charges against him and he did not raise all those duties. That is for you to answer. But basically I find no solution in this budget to any of these problems of inflation, high prices and unemployment.

You, Sir, while speaking yesterday as an ordinary member, made much of the rural employment scheme which has been announced. I find that it is really a little improvement and a little strengthening of the existing food for work programme. That is what it comes to. The food for work programme is a good thing, is very essential and is one of the most positive things which have been done in recent years; that he has sought to strengthen a little bit, no doubt. That is all. It is not something so revolutionary or radical as you—if I may say so with all respect—were trying to make out yesterday in your very brilliant speech. That is all it is.

Taken as a whole, this budget, I am afraid, in another six months' time, will land this country in a much worse crisis. Inflation will go completely out of hand, I fear. Some people will suffer, some people will prosper as a result of it. That will only accentuate the tensions and confrontations in this country, which nobody can prevent. These are not things which are engineered by somebody by some conspiratorial methods. This is something working within the economic system itself and people find that they are being denied of their minimum due, while certain other people are making hay while the sun shines. You cannot prevent social tensions and confrontations from developing within the society. The poor people, the ordinary working class have certainly a right to fight for their rights and their demands. If such a situation develops, I do not know on which side the ruling party will stand. It will be a challenge to them also. They will have to show clearly on whose side they are. But as far as some of us are concerned, we will have no where to go but to stand with the people and whatever difficulties and burdens they may have, if they

have to fight for their rights and demands, we shall certainly stand along with them.

I would like to ask Shri Venkataraman to consider, before he replies and before he decides whether he is going to make any modification, whether these heavy concessions which are being made to a group of people who are already the gainers from inflation, should not be scaled down and at least whether they should not be given to understand that they alone will be the beneficiaries, while the bulk of the people, the overwhelming majority, are condemned to suffering, unemployment and starvation. So, we cannot support this budget. This is a budget for the rich. Whatever so-called benefits have been promised, they are not actually likely to reach the people. They will be swallowed up midway by a whole gang of unscrupulous traders, blackmarketeers, hoarders and sharks who are operating in our economy. Both ways the ordinary man will lose and a small coterie of people will gain. That is certainly not going to be very healthy for the future of this country.

BUDGET MUST ADDRESS THE COMMON MAN'S CONCERNS*

Mr. Speaker, Sir... Let the exodus be over, before I begin. It will not be out of place, though I belong to this side of the House, if I would like to congratulate Shri Gandhi**. Not that I agree with most of what he said, but much of what he said was non-controversial. At least I congratulate him for his manner of presentation, which was serious, which has not always been like that in the past with many people on that side.

Last year I had dubbed here Shri Venkataraman's*** budget as a gambler's budget, because he was gambling, particularly on his expectations from the Bearer Bonds, to see him tide over his difficulties. Ultimately, last year and this year together, those bearer bonds fetched him an amount of a little under Rs. 1000 crore. But as events show, this is not adequate by any means in today's inflationary conditions to tackle the enormous deficits which are growing all the time and we have seen this year that his young successor whose job is certainly not an enviable one, has also landed himself more or less in the same soup.

*** *** ***

I say I would not call him a gambler, I think I should describe his budget as a 'grasshopper's budget'. A grasshopper, as you know, Sir, does not sit at one spot for a long time. A grasshopper jumps about, hops about from place to place. Therefore, when this Budget was presented the other day, many people considered it to be rather a sort of a neutral budget, a conventional budget, a budget from which nothing very much stands out sharply, and so on. But I should say that it is not possible for any Finance Minister at this stage to chart a new path, to break out in a new direction different from the trends and the policies which we have been following or the Government has been following for the last so many years.

Some friends on this side of the House, as far as I could make out—I was not present here unfortunately, but from the reports I read—had suggested that this year's budget proposals have been dictated by the International

* Taking part in the discussion on the General Budget 1982-83; *L.S. Deb.*, 11 March 1982.
** Referring to Shri Rajiv Gandhi, MP
*** Referring to Shri R. Venkataraman, the then Union Finance Minister.

Monetary Fund. I will not go that far because I think it is too early to come to such a conclusion because the conditionalities of the IMF are such that they require some more time to unfold themselves and we have read today in the *Economic Times* about which the Minister will tell us—he can confirm it or deny it—that a delegation of the Finance Ministry is being sent to the USA so as to explain to the IMF authorities that the main provisions and outlines of this budget do not violate or transgress the conditionalities on the basis of which we have got these Special Drawing Rights, the loan of Rs. 5000 crore. So, obviously it has not been dictated in that crude sense, but on the other hand, there is no doubt that the Budget very much carries the imprint of the International Monetary Fund's philosophy and its conditionalities. This *Economic Survey* which was presented to this House by the Finance Minister himself only a few days ago, after describing the features of the Sixth Plan, has this to say:

> "All these features are central to the adjustment programme which forms the basis of the extended arrangement with the IMF."

So, it is not necessary for me to say, it is admitted here at page 61 of the *Economic Survey* that 'all these features of the Plan are central to the adjustment programme which forms the basis of the extended arrangement with the IMF'. There is no escape from it now. You cannot help it. The moment you try to get out of this adjustment, well, that will be the end of the IMF's facilities without which apparently this Government thinks it is not possible to carry on.

Now, Sir, what is the new thing that we see in the budget this year—'new' in the sense that it is not basically carrying forward the same line, the same policy which was there last year, the previous year? But I should say that certain compulsions are operating. One is the massive proliferation of black money. In spite of it, Shri Rajiv Gandhi has spoken just now optimistically. He is a young man, so he is optimistic, but we do not see any effective measures being taken at all to curb what was described as a parallel economy. It is a serious matter indeed for any Government to be faced with a parallel economy. So, this black money is proliferating all the time. Secondly, the big business houses, that is, those companies which come under the MRTP Act and the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act have become economically stronger and more self-confident. Their assets have grown. I need not put these figures again. There is tremendous growth in the assets of these big companies over the last ten years. Their profits have increased. Their dividend rates have gone up. These big business houses are also pressurising the Government. Just as parallel economy is operating, the big business houses are trying to get more out of the economy for themselves. They are not operating out of any altruistic motives. And then there is pressure

of the growing foreign collaboration. These things added up together have, I think, produced the state of affairs where any budget which is now brought forward is bound to reflect the new emphasis on these trends, *i.e.* the trend of so-called liberalisation. Liberalisation, previously it used to be these gentlemen—Birlas and Tatas and so on—used to go on complaining and grousing about too many restrictions, too many controls, that this is the biggest obstacle to production. But now it seems, after so many years of persuasion and pressure they have succeeded in winning over the Government of India to their philosophy completely. Previously there was some attempt in the larger social interests, in the interest of self-reliance in the interest of building a strong infrastructure of domestic production. There was some attempt at least at developing the public sector, at planning, at import substitution, at various types of controls which were meant to limit the unfettered activities of these private interests. But now liberalisation in the interests of production has become one slogan of the Government. Entry into the core sector has been opened up to the large houses. This was one restriction, very basic earlier, and so called high technology areas are being opened up and going apparently to be further opened in future to the foreign companies and mainly that means to the transnationals or the multinational companies. What I am trying to make out is, it would not be correct to say that under pressure of the International Monetary Fund some new departure or some new principles have been undertaken by the Government this year as reflected in this budget. I would remind the House that in the IMF Memorandum and in the letter of the Government of India to the IMF it became amply clear that policies and trends which were being pursued by the Government in this country for some time past and which have been adumbrated in the pages of the Sixth Five Year Plan, those were approved by the IMF. It was not necessary for the IMF to say that—no, you are following a wrong line, you must change this and do this and do that. What they have said in their own Memorandum is by and large the assessment team which they sent have said, "by and large the Government of India is pursuing a path which is exactly what we want." Of course, they want certain things to be emphasised more. That is a different matter. So, it would be wrong to say that upto last year the Government was proceeding on some line which has been upset and diverted by the entry of the IMF. It is not so. The IMF have rubber stamped and approved what the Government was basically doing even before this Rs. 5000 crore loan came.

Shri Rajiv Gandhi himself has also mentioned that this year the budget, of course, has spared the corporate sector entirely from the tax net. So, there is going to be a fall in the revenue from direct taxes. It has given them plenty of concessions. Shri Gandhi approves of that. He thinks this is going to lead to greater production. Time will make us wiser whether bribes and jobs given to these people in the form of concession—wealth tax, capital gains tax,

depreciation, allowance, income tax on dividends, tax holiday for exports plus another additional Rs. 500 crore given as export subsidy, whether these things are going to produce results! Time will say. But every year this question comes up and every year we have to point out that by placating and appeasing this section, this powerful section of the private sector, the results are not going to follow.

Has there been some growth in production? Well, I think, here and there, there has been and there is bound to be some growth when considering the size of the outlay and so on. But in the pages of the *Economic Survey* itself, Sir I have no time to quote, though I am tempted to quote so many paragraphs, the Government itself admits that increase in production which has taken place, particularly in 1980-81 and 1981-82, is mainly due to three factors. One, they say, is the great improvement in the infrastructure whose performance had become very miserable at one time and special attention was paid to see that infrastructure picked up. Shri Mukherjee* has also claimed that the infrastructure has now improved very much. That is one factor.

The second factor which I am surprised to find is they admitted so many times in the *Economic Survey*—the remarkable improvement in labour relations. That means, there have been less strikes, less interruptions of production, the workers are working hard etc. Of course, on other occasions, all of us this side had to point out the absurdity of the situation that when there is such a better labour relations, such a decline in the number of mandays lost, strikes and all that, that was the moment you selected to reward the labour of this country with the Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance and now with the threats of wage freeze and impounding of dearness allowance. This is how you reconcile the remarkable improvement in the labour relations. This is not my language. This is the language which I am quoting from the *Economic Survey*. What are you offering them as reward for that?

Thirdly the virtual abandonment of the restrictions imposed by the MRTP Act and Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA), it is these things which have rather to some extent stimulated production. Now, I must say one thing before I forget about this "infrastructure". The House should not be misled because we have been told that in the industries in the core sector, including steel, there has been remarkable pick up because of the improvement in the infrastructure. I have to point out, Sir, on the 24th February the Minister of State in the Ministries of Industry and Steel and Mines, Dr. Charanjit Chanana stated in Parliament publicly that this year, that is the year ending 31st March, 1982—only a few days are remaining—about the non-fulfilment of the revised target of steel production. He is certain about non-fulfilment

*Referring to Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the then Union Finance Minister.

and he has said it is due entirely to the failure of infrastructural support. He has said that last year that target of 5.7 million tonnes was revised upward to 6.3 million tonnes on the assumption that they would get better infrastructural support. That means supply of coal, supply of power, better movement of railway wagons and so on. But he admits that now because of the failure of the infrastructural support, even the original target of 5.73 million tonnes cannot be achieved by the end of this month. And in spite of admitting his failure, the *Economic Survey* has predicted: "New peak levels of production of steel."

How do you reconcile these things? The Minister in-charge of Steel is saying something different. After so many years of production of our five public sector steel plants, certainly you cannot say there have been lot of strikes and labour troubles and so on, they have not been able to achieve the original target of 5.73 million tonnes. The Minister-in-charge has said that this is mainly due to the collapse of the infrastructure which they had anticipated would be there to support them. But the *Economic Survey* waxes eloquent about the great achievements of infrastructure that they have brought about.

*** *** ***

About the burdens, the new imposts that have been imposed on the people and all that I think, that has been talked about enough here. There is nothing surprising. If you are not going to impose any tax on the corporate sector and direct taxes are going to be given a go by, where is the money going to come from? Obviously, all these things have happened. There are additional levies to the tune of an amount of Rs. 533 crore which incidentally is 70 per cent more than that of Shri R. Venkataraman's budget last year. It is not a very small amount. But it is going to be realised almost entirely by way of customs duties and excise duties. There will be a decline in the revenue from direct taxes.

Now, it has become a regular exercise of the Government. Just before the budget, this year, from December, 1981 to February, 1982, in these 3 months, a burden of Rs. 1250 crore was heaved on the people of this country through the hikes in railway freight rates, passenger fares, tele-communication tariffs, increase in posts and telegraph rates and all that. The Government of India claimed to IMF that in the first 16 months of the Sixth Plan, they have already fulfilled 92 per cent of the resources target which was there for the whole Plan period. The cumulative budgetary deficit for the entire plan period was fixed at Rs. 5000 crore, that it should not go above that. This deficit has already been exceeded in the first three years by 40 crore. Now I understand why we were never permitted to discuss even the draft of the Sixth Plan. It is something unprecedented. I do not know if the IMF wants that Parliament

of India should not discuss the Plan. This is the first time that it has happened, in my 20 years of being in this House, I regret to say, Shri Ranga,* you should not be happy about it; you used to sit with me once in that corner—that even the Plan at its draft stage was never discussed in this House; the time could not be found for it.

Further, there is a rise in loans from financial institutions—to whom? We know very well—and it has gone up in 1981-82 by 24.8 per cent, the expansion of bank credit has gone up by 34.3 per cent for industry, other than the small-scale sector, it has gone up by 23.8 per cent for wholesale trade. As he knows very well, for the portfolio he was holding a little while ago, an extra credit of a substantial amount was found for the jute mills. And today, in West Bengal, 13 jute mills are lying closed, closed down by the employers. What have they done with that extra credit which was given to them to purchase raw jute? Only the Government knows, nobody else knows. But while production is growing in some sectors, on the other side, the sickness of industry is growing. He does not tell us anything about that very much except to say, in future, if the units fall sick, they will not be taken over by the Government.

The *Economic Survey* says on p. 2:

> "An indepth analysis carried out by the Reserve Bank of India to identify the reasons for industrial sickness of large industrial units revealed that in the majority of such Units, about 52 per cent internal causes like management deficiencies, diversion of funds."

A polite name for theft and embezzlement.

> "Lack of clear marketing strategy and infighting among different interests, were the major causes of sickness."

So, because of this, I think, a few hundreds, 300 or 400 of large Units in this country are closed at the moment and the loss of production which is caused thereby does not seem to cause any concern to the Government at all! No tears are shed for that.

If a worker threatens to go on strike, well, he would be shown the *danda* of ESMA!

But 400 big industrialists can close down their factories saying that they are sick after having embezzled the money and done infighting among their family members, nobody threatens them either inside or outside the House. So, we know in what type of society we are living in!

*Referring to Shri N.G. Ranga, MP

Another point which the IMF Memorandum is very happy about is that the Government apparently assured them that special provisions which were made so far for safeguarding the interests of the small-scale sector would be relaxed and modified and made more realistic.

I think that the small-scale sector in this country is quite an important sector. But we tend to be confused and dazzled by the glamour of these Tatas and Birlas.

In this present Budget, what has Shri Pranab Mukherjee done? I will give two examples.

60 per cent customs duty has been imposed on the import of scrap, the stainless steel scrap, raising the price by Rs. 7 per kg. and this will mean, I am told, that the survival of about 800 small Units, small furnaces and of manufacturers of utensils who use this scrap for making utensils, their very survival, is likely to be threatened. I would like to know what is the logic behind this raising of customs duty by 60 per cent.

Then there is another question which is even more remarkable. Long ago, in 1966, the manufacture of laundry soap, washing soap, was reserved exclusively for the small-scale sector. But even today, after so many years, about 16 years, questions are asked here and replies are given. The last reply given was on 2nd December in response to one of my questions: "Although the manufacture of laundry soap has been exclusively reserved for the small-scale sector, no ceiling has been put on the capacity of Hindustan Lever Company", which is the king of soaps. Hindustan Lever, apart from being a branch of the world-wide multi-national Unilevers, is the king of soaps of this country, flooding the market with soaps. There is no ceiling, no restriction, on their capacity for making laundry soap and it is said here hypocritically that: "manufacture of laundry soap is reserved exclusively for the small-scale sector."

In fact, the small-scale sector threatens to be completely throttled and wiped out by this giant, this Hindustan Lever. What is the policy of the Government? Please explain.

Then, not content with the huge inflationary effect of raising railway freights, not only railway freights, even the exemption which used to be given previously by the railways for these surcharges on essential commodities like foodgrains, edible oils, sugar and all these things, which were exempted from the special charges, even this exemption has been withdrawn this time which means that prices of all these commodities would shoot up.

Still not content with this, Shri Pranab Mukherjee has now put an excise duty of 66 per cent ad valorem on tyres which are used by trucks, also for transporting commodities to the market. Since 1977-78, I found out that these major tyre companies have increased their prices 14 times, they have been allowed 14 times, to increase the prices of tyres, and they have increased their profits by 400 per cent. There is an institution known as the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices which, I am told, is supposed to go into these things and find out whether these companies are justified in claiming such frequent increases in the prices of their products. Has any report been received from the Bureau about the manufacture of tyres which is more or less, monopolised by five or six big tyre companies: every one knows, most of them are foreign collaboration companies like Dunlop, Good Year and all these people. Again this excise duty on tyre has led within these few days to another demand. If you read the newspapers, some of the tyre manufacturers have already started saying that there will have to be another hike in the prices of tyres which means that this will add to the inflationary cost of transport of commodities. I would not like to say, but I should suggest to the Minister that he should kindly probe into the fact, into the allegation—not fact—that some high officials of the Industry Ministry are in regular collusion with these big tyre manufacturers and it is due to their recommendations that these prices are hiked all the time.

*** *** ***

There is a big increase in the outlay of the Central Plan which was applauded here very loudly when it was announced. In terms of money, it is a big increase in outlay, some 27.6 per cent. But that is not enough. You have to tell us what is the pattern of this outlay. Simply increasing the quantum of outlay is not necessarily going to help the common man at all. In fact, there are tables showing on which sectors plan outlays have been increased and on which sectors plan outlays have been reduced, and if you analyse those carefully, you will find that the common man is not going to benefit at all. He will hardly benefit from any of these things. The whole thing is geared, as the Government had been moving in that direction all the time—and now the IMF has put its rubberstamp on that—for the so-called priority sectors. How are these things distributed among the priority sectors, please tell us.

We find that there is a change, a tilt, in favour of exporters. Exporters are generally big exporters, these MRTP and FERA companies and the rural rich, the rich sections in the country. This Plan outlay is not going to benefit the small farmers, the poor farmers, the marginal farmers or the landless people, it will benefit to some extent the rural rich who are able to purchase tractors and do that kind of thing.

I do not want to take up more time, but I would say that this Budget is really a grasshopper's budget, trying to conceal the reality, the truth, and the truth of the matter is that this IMF staff which came here to appraise the Plan—and was followed later, as you know, by the team of inspectors who have been moving about here—has appraised the Plan and the general direction of the Government's policy by saying that the focus of the adjustment programme is explicitly on the structural adjustment of the economy, they refer, in so many places, to the new pragmatic industrial policy—I am quoting all this from the IMF document—further progressive liberalisation of imports, a striking change in the Government's policy towards the private industrial sector—it may be striking to the IMF staff, I do not know, but it is not striking to us, we have seen it going on for a long time—a liberal attitude to foreign collaboration, mobilisation of resources by raising the administered prices, greater freedom to the forces of international competition—which means less protection for domestic industries—a clear shift in favour of exports, they have said that this is a major change against the policy of import substitution which in due course, in the long term would lead to a change in the structure of the economy.

I should say this Budget is one more nail in the coffin of self-reliance. It is bartering away self-reliance. If you give up the policies of import substitution and modify your policies in a direction which you have yourself to condemn—just now you held the South Conference in this country, which was a very important and useful conference, I should say and I congratulate the Government of India for holding that conference, but those countries which came there, of the so-called South were telling—this is the very malady which they are complaining about all the time—that it is the developed countries, the countries where the multi-nationals and trans-nationals operate, who want these developing countries of the Third World to attune their policies to this goal, to give up self-reliance, to give up import-substitution, to forget the domestic market, to concentrate on export market but the export market is also blocked by them due to their own protectionism. They would not allow our exports to go there and they would flood our market with their imports. Is this not that the whole South-South Conference was talking about? Is this not the warning which President Julius Nyerere gave you last week when he came here to take an award from the Prime Minister in the Vigyan Bhavan? He is one victim of IMF in his own country—a friend who pointed out to you, 'Beware of this IMF. Once it gets at the throat of these developing countries, this is what they try to do.'

I would say that the Budget—I do not want to analyse every line of the Budget—is only an annual reflection-of the general policies which the Government is following, the general economic, financial and industrial policies and so on. But I would just tell my friend because he is a good friend

of mine for many years—you have now put your foot on a thorny path. You should try to think twice, thrice and four times before proceeding headlong along this path because it will have the most deleterious effects for the Indian economy and whether you like it or not, it will mean that the goals of self-reliance, of an independent economic development, of import substitution which we have set before ourselves from the days of Shri Rajiv Gandhi's grand-father in the Plans which he had adumbrated, all those goals will have to be gradually given up. They will be eroded.

Shri Venkataraman had said last time and he had assured us at the time of IMF discussion that if we find that these things are going against the country's long-term interests, if instead of strengthening the economy, they begin to weaken the economy, then we are not under any compulsion to go on taking all the instalments of this loan. We can free ourselves from this incubus if we consider it necessary. So, I should say that the Government should think ten times before they proceed along the whole of this path. But even supposing the whole of the IMF thing is written of, where will we be? Because what is the line they have been following all these years? Therefore, we find that the biggest beneficiaries are particularly those very interests who are not interested in strengthening the economy and who are more interested in their own profits. That way, Sir, this economy will face suicide and I cannot of course, support the Budget because there is nothing there to support it. It is only a reflection of the *Economic Survey* and the philosophy. Therefore, I cannot support it in any case and I have to oppose it and I hope that he will not just give a little bit of 2 per cent excise duty reduction here and 1 per cent of something which is all irrelevant. You can do it or not do it, it does not matter anything to me at all.

The more this question is discussed, the more it becomes clear that it is too ticklish and serious a question to be disposed of by way of a Calling Attention Motion. We have given notices for a discussion on this matter. I hope, Sir, during this Session you will give us an opportunity to discuss it at greater length because it cannot be dealt with so briefly.

As far as this statement** is concerned and this analysis of index figures, etc., I do not attach very great importance to it. Even a paper like the *Statesman* today comes out with the heading "Paradox of High Prices and Low Index". When the whole country knows that prices are rising, the index figures are going down. The jugglery of index figures and the method of compilation, we know.

*** *** ***

During this brief discussion, I want to highlight one aspect. It is not merely a question of hardship for the common people that is involved, of course, that is exercising the minds of all of us, but the entire economy of the country is being distorted by this galloping monster of inflation and deficit financing, which is leading to price rise. We are now meeting at a time when there is a grave emergency on the borders. At a moment like this, however important the front may be, the rear is equally important. As my friend Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee said, we have to think of short-term, emergent, measures also in this emergency, apart from long-term measures, which are, of course, necessary. Otherwise, you cannot defend your country and fight a war in the front, if the rear is going to collapse. I hope the Minister will consider this when he replies. At the time of presentation of the last budget a few months ago by the Finance Minister, members from all sections of the House, including many from the other side, had expressed their apprehension that this large number of indirect taxes and imposts will lead to a general increase in the price level again.

---

* Participating in the discussion on the Calling Attention Motion regarding price rise of essential commodities; *L.S. Deb.*, 16 November 1971.

**Referring to the remarks made by Shri Y. B. Chavan, the then Minister of Finance.

At that time, the Finance Minister had assured us that since he had not placed any new burdens on those commodities which are essential for the use of the common man, there is no reason why the prices should go up. After a few weeks, when the prices had suddenly begun to rise, we read in the Press—at that time Parliament was in recess—that when a Press man had asked him how it is happening, he was quoted in the Press as saying, "I have been let down by the traders and the business community." After a few more days, he was quoted again, either in a speech or in a statement, saying that the only solution is for the people to develop consumer resistance. That means that the Government cannot do anything, which is a confession of bankruptcy or defeat. He said that it is for the public and the consumers to organise resistance against these unscrupulous profiteers, speculators, hoarders, and so on. I am not discussing that here because that cannot be done here; it has to be done outside. I am also quite sure that it can be done outside with the co-operation of the people, provided Government give an assurance to the people of this country that when they seriously take up resistance against profiteers and hoarders the police will not come to the rescue of the hoarders and act against the people.

This evening in this city of Delhi, and in other cities also, the trade unions and workers will be organising an indirect form of resistance, not to the traders but to the venerable institution which finances these people and allows them to go on indulging in speculation and hoarding, that is, the Reserve Bank of India. Demonstrations are going to take place this very evening demanding a change in the credit policy. I will remind the hon. Minister that his own *Economic Survey* of last year, which is quite cautious in a way when it describes the situation, had this to say on page 44:

> "Irrespective of selective credit and administrative controls where supplies are constricted, a general increase in credit is bound to leave some influence on prices."

It is very cautiously worded.

> "Besides in a situation marked by excess demand, the exercise of group or monopoly power, of which speculative activity is a manifestation, cannot but gain a certain ascendancy."

This is what your own *Economic Survey* has said on page 44 last year. This is sufficient warning and acceptance of the basic cause of the malady. It is not simply a case of production not increasing, as Shri Vajpayee has said. Even if the production increases, the prices may not go down. The whole paradox and contradiction of the present economic system, not only in this country but in other countries where a similar system exists is that high production does not necessarily ensure cheaper goods to the people. In fact, when

production goes up there are vested interests involved who prefer to see that production is kept down, artificially curtailed and restricted, supplies are restricted, so that the prices and profits can go up. We are talking about Green Revolution, record food production and so on and yet we find no reflection of it on the prices. Last year, the sugar production was very high, record production as he himself said. But did it bring the desired relief to the people? Not at all. They are again thinking of imposing restrictions. The same thing happened in textiles, in oilseeds, oils and so many other things. So, the truth of the matter is what has been very cautiously revealed by the *Economic Survey*. You may impose price control but the stocks and supplies are controlled by somebody else. So, your price control has no value and you cannot implement it. Therefore, the paradox of this system is that people who are controlling production, trading, market, etc., whose only *raison detre* is to make profits, these people are not going to submit to this kind of administrative control of prices and so on. If they find that production is going up and prices are likely to fall, they have sufficient power even today to keep production down artificially, restrict supplies so that prices and profits are kept up. If you are fighting shy, if you are shirking the issue for other reasons, for political or other reasons, you will never be able to get out of this mess. Now what is happening is that the Reserve Bank of India, which is controlling the credit policy, particularly after the nationalisation of banks, even though I do concede it is giving credit to some sectors which were neglected before, by and large, the bulk of its credit is still going along the old lines.

It has been revealed in so many statements. Economic journals have given all the facts. It is there. Once the big business people complained a few months ago that they were being starved of credit after the nationalisation of banks. This was a ruse, I think, to provoke you. The custodians of the banks immediately rushed to the Press with a joint statement to assure these people saying, "No, no; we have given very little credit to other sectors; the bulk of the credit is still reserved for you." It is on record in the statement.

What is happening is that white money of the Reserve Bank and the banks is combining with black money which is hoarded outside and the two together see to it that prices do not come down at all. Artificial restrictions are imposed on production and the whole market is being controlled by speculators.

Therefore, I only want to ask him whether, apart from the long-term policy and apart from the fact that we do not have any confidence at the moment that this Government will ever take the kind of steps that are necessary to break this grip of big monopoly and vested interests over the economy, they will consider at least some immediate, emergency measures

not only because of the situation facing the country but also because we are now, as it happens, at the beginning of the new season. This is the beginning of the credit season; so, do not let last year's things be repeated.

In the name of this policy of liberal credit, you know very well what is happening actually. I think, the different Ministries of the Government of India have got differing viewpoints on this policy. Perhaps, the Planning Ministry is not so happy with this policy of liberal credit as the Finance Ministry is. The Finance Ministry is afraid that if credit is squeezed, there may be a fall in prices. The Planning Commission and the Planning Ministry, I think fear that if in the name of liberal credit policy these people are allowed to go on doing speculation, holding of stocks and all that, prices will go from bad to worse. Therefore, my first suggestion would be an immediate halt to this policy of liberal credit and money supply, specially in the trading sector at this time when the season is beginning.

Secondly, all forward markets should be closed. Why should you not close them? Close all the forward markets. Why are you allowing this particular device of the capitalist system?

*** *** ***

It is not being done. Some regulations in one or two forward markets have been introduced; that is all.

Thirdly, would you consider physical controls on the storage, distribution and prices, not only on prices but on storage, distribution and prices, of certain essential commodities which are very necessary for the people? At least as an emergency measure, do this; otherwise, I shudder to think what will happen if some bombs fall on Calcutta city tomorrow and if a war breaks out. Already the condition of the market is such that people are being fleeced right and left. Then the profiteers and vested interests will run riot, because Government has no control over supplies and stocks. They are in somebody else's hands and you go on issuing only paper orders to impose price control which nobody observes.

Fourthly, these large credits for holding stocks of consumer goods should be withdrawn.

If you are prepared to take even these steps, then we would consider them to be some earnest measure of your future intentions; otherwise, I think, we are dealing only superficially with these things. The real problem is much deeper and this problem of the monopoly and the speculative interests has to be squarely tackled and fought. You have not nationalised a single industry which produces consumer goods for the people. Why do you not take over one at least and see what can be done about it? Just see what is the

condition of the oldest industry in this country, the textile industry. From year to year prices are going up. Sometimes mills are closing down; sometimes stocks are piling up; sometimes prices are raised; sometimes prices are brought down; sometimes production is deliberately curtailed. What is this? Why do you not take it over? At no stage the people are getting the benefit of cheaper cloth. Therefore, you must introduce measures of nationalisation and physical control and take certain emergency measures to curb this speculation by banning all forward markets and lending for holding of big stocks.

RISE IN PRICES: A MATTER OF SERIOUS CONCERN*

Sir, over the last 26 years, after Independence, the people of this country have become accustomed to the practically continuous rise in prices. It is not a new feature. But what is happening now, in the recent weeks and months, is something which is completely unprecedented. Particularly during the months of June and July—as recent as that—the market seems to have run amuck. There is an unprecedented run-away rise in prices which is not explicable by any normal reasons or causes. Even according to the Government's figures, during the course of one year, there has been a rise of 20.5 per cent in the general index of wholesale prices. If that is the extent of the rise in wholesale prices, one can well imagine what has happened in the retail market.

Then, Sir, over large areas of the country, the rationing system, not only the modified rationing system but even the statutory rationing system, is virtually collapsing. Its collapse means that millions of people are thrown to the mercy of the wolves of the open market, and the open market becomes the ruthless exploiting agency which is spelling out starvation and misery for our people. For example, I can tell you, only recently in my State of West Bengal when the rice ration in Calcutta city, a statutory-ration area, the quantum of rice ration was reduced from one kilogram per week to 750 grams, what happened immediately, within one week, was that the price of rice in the open market had risen from Rs. 3.25 to Rs. 3.50 per kg. Who can afford to buy at this price? The question has to be answered as to who is going to buy at this price. The price in the open market in Calcutta goes on rising; it may reach, within another fortnight, Rs. 4. Who will buy at this price? How can people buy at this price? And seeing this trend, I make bold to say that the famine conditions which are stalking many rural areas of our country today in many States will soon penetrate even into urban areas and the poor and the middleclass sections are going to be their first victims. If any one says that I am exaggerating, I would just refer him to the reports on a city like Patna which is the capital of Bihar where, Press report have said only two days ago, not a grain of wheat is available in any of the ration shops

*Moving the Motion for Adjournment over the abnormal rise in prices of essential commodities. The Motion was negatived; *L.S. Deb.*, 23 July 1973.

in Patna City, let alone the urban hinterland where all the modified ration shops in Bihar, in the countryside, are reported to be closed because there are no supplies. 55 lakhs of people in Bihar are starving and disquieting reports are coming of looting of food stocks and food riots in some places. It is not only a question of foodgrains. The essence of the phenomenon at present is that prices of all essential commodities, without exception are reaching levels which have completely disrupted the family budget of lakhs of families—the essential commodities without which it is not possible for any ordinary middle-class family to carry on. If anybody stops a stranger and asks him what is the main trouble, he will just refer to one thing and one thing alone, that it is impossible for him to now carry on from day to day if the prices go on unchecked in this way.

Let me quote a few figures. These are published in newspapers and these are not, I think capable of contradiction. The *Hindustan Standard* has given a picture about the recent rise in prices of essential food articles. It says:

> "Mustard oil does not seem to have any fixed price and is sold according to the whims of the traders. Its present price ranges from Rs. 7.50 to Rs. 8.80, having shot up by stages...."

Rs. 8.80 per kilo. This is on the 14th of this month. When I left Calcutta yesterday, the price had gone upto Rs. 9 per kilo.

> "The price in the beginning of June was Rs. 6.80. A well-known brand of mustard oil which was sold at Rs. 8.16 last month and Rs. 8.40 in the first week of the current month is now selling at Rs. 8.80."

Further, it says:

> "Scarcity in mustard oil and groundnut oil was further accentuated by irregular and insufficient supply of rapeseed oil... Fair price shops once started distributing rapeseed oil to the consumers. But before the reaction of the people could be sufficiently known, some invisible hands abruptly stopped its supply.... There is wanton wastage of rapeseed at different railway sheds and Food Corporation of India godowns.

*** *** ***

> Thanks to the endless greed of the sharks in Burra Bazar, Calcutta's biggest wholesale commodity market. While the country cries for food, some people are having a roaring time exploiting the situation and reaping huge profits. They have secured stocking licence for mustard seed and oil from the Government for manufacture of vanaspati....".

*** *** ***

Then, it says:

> "But the margin of profit in vanaspati being" too meagre, they are now manufacturing refined mustard oil and selling it to the hoteliers.
>
> 'The condition in the vanaspati trade is much more serious. It has become so scarce that even people who once used it as their main cooking media have forgotten its taste. Here again, the mischief is the creation of the traders of Burra Bazar. Only in the recent past 16 kg. of this brand of vanaspati was sold at Rs. 132. The black market price is Rs. 142. Except at a few places, vanaspati is not at all visible in the open market, whatever is available is either adulterated or far beyond the reach of the common man."

I can go on endlessly quoting it. Then, coming to the prices of pulses, it says:

> "Mosur dal which used to be Rs. 1.90 to Rs. 2 a kg. a month ago is now selling at Rs. 2.20. Channa dal which was sold at Rs. 1.90 is being sold at Rs. 2.25...."

These prices are only about a fortnight ago. Every day, the prices are rising, one price in the morning and another price in the evening. I am aware of the fact that these figures are out of date. I quote:

> "The entire trade on pulses is being controlled by a few *gaddiwalas* of Burra Bazar.... These *gaddiwalas* are powerful and some even control the movement of railway wagons, thereby introducing artificial scarcity into the market.
>
> "Spices too have become dear. Wholesale price of jeera is Rs. 7 per kg. and retail price is Rs. 10. Dhania-wholesale price is Rs. 2.50 and retail price is Rs. 5. Haldi-wholesale price Rs. 5, retail price Rs. 7. Mircha-wholesale price Rs. 6.50, retail price Rs. 8."

There is a reference to so many other things. Even for things like baby food, "the price of a small tin of Lactogen, ranges from Rs. 7.90 to Rs. 8.50."

Coming to coal and kerosene oil, it says:

> "The control price of coal is below Rs. 5. But it is being sold at Rs. 7.50...."

It is even more in many places.

> "a number of dishonest traders have started mixing kerosene oil with petrol since petrol price has gone up, thereby creating artificial scarcity of kerosene oil in the market".

... And so on and so forth, I want to know why no action has been taken against these people against whom accusing fingers have been pointed out, at these people who are doing this shameless and reckless profiteering and I want to ask: why are these people not being punished? Why is it that no deterrent punishment has been given in spite of the big, great, tall, directive issued by Shri Uma Shankar Dikshit, which appeared in all the papers directing State Governments to use all the legal powers which they have got. The Defence of India Act is there. The Essential Commodities (Maintenance) Act is there. The Maintenance of Internal Security Act is there. So many rules and regulations are there. If Shri Dikshit's directive which has been reported in the Press has been used against the people indulging in this kind of hoarding and profiteering, I want to ask the Minister, when he replies to the Debate, to tell us as to what are the specific directions in which these directives have been carried out and what are the steps which have been taken in this regard.

*** *** ***

What is the situation which we are confronted with today? For the last two years the Government has been telling us that because of the Green Revolution, the days are past when this country will have to be dependent upon imports from abroad. But now, not because we may not be having fluctuating production from one year to another,—that is quite feasible and possible, we are still largely dependent upon the vagaries of monsoon, I agree—but in the years when we had a very good crop of the order of 104 million tonnes or 108 million tonnes, etc. no adequate buffer stock was built up by this Government. Now the sorry state of the present situation is that we have to depend upon foreign imports. Why? Is there no wheat in the country? Are all the wheat stocks depleted? Is that why we have to go to America, Canada and Argentina? The people are not going to accept their arguments. The wheat is there, because, on the basis of those wheat stocks Government had formulated its projected plans and targets for procurement. But what has been the result of such projects? We know. Now you come and tell the people, we have to spend a huge amount for buying wheat from abroad, because it is selling at very high price, international prices are ruling high, etc. Everybody knows it. The calculation has been made by the Government that in this year alone if we purchase all the wheat which is available from abroad, all the wheat which we want, then, it would cost us in the neighbourhood of Rs. 4.50 crore. That is for this year, 1973-74. I want to know as to where this amount of money is going to come from. It was not provided for in Shri Chavan's* Budget last February. Nobody thought of it, that this may become necessary. Where is this amount of Rs. 4.50 crore going to come from? Does it mean they are going in for more indirect taxes, for a

*Referring to Shri Y.B. Chavan, the then Minister of Finance.

supplementary Budget, with a whole range of new taxation? From what we have seen, I apprehend and the people apprehend, that this would bring in another wide range of indirect taxes. This will again put up prices. If we do not go in for indirect taxes we have to go in for straight deficit financing and printing of more currency notes and pumping them into the economy which will again lead to inflation and higher prices. This is the situation and I do not know what we are supposed to be in for at the present moment. All reasons, explanations, etc. will no doubt be given. But, I accuse the Government of being itself responsible for pushing up prices.

Only now, in the recent weeks, Government announced that the price of Vanaspati will be increased by 75 paise per kilogram. What is the situation of the Vanaspati in retail market? It is only because Vanaspati manufacturers came and told them, our prices of inputs have become so much that we cannot make any margin of profits, that the Government came out with a statement permitting enhancement of 75 paise per kilogram in the price of Vanaspati.

Then, take the case of levy sugar which is supposed to be 70 per cent, only 30 per cent being available for the open market. But everybody knows that 70 per cent levy sugar is never there. Let the Government give monthwise returns. Never has more than 50 or 55 per cent of this been available as levy sugar in the whole country. The rest of it is being diverted to the black market. The price of levy sugar in the ration shops was also, about two months ago increased by the Government. Everybody knows what a tiny amount of sugar he gets in the ration, and even the price of that was put up. The total quantum of levy sugar is never available to consumers. At least 25 to 30 per cent of it is going into the black market.

Only last week, I was surprised to read in the papers that the Ministry of Commerce had come out with a communiqué saying that coarse cloth prices, medium cloth prices and the prices of medium high varieties would be permitted to be pegged at a figure 10 per cent higher than the prices in November 1972. This is the Government's official statement and their official decision.

Of course, petroleum products prices have been put up. Of course, you may say that we are at the mercy of the foreigners in this matter; I do not quite know. But the fact remains that public transport charges are going to go up very high because of diesel and petroleum prices going up. I am not talking about people with private cars. We need not bother about them. But as far as the buses are concerned, already in many parts of the country, bus-owners are all agitating, and petrol filling-station-owners are agitating, saying that they must be given higher rates and higher commissions. All this will be

reflected in the budget of the people. Government themselves are contributing to these things. What I mean to say is that Government are not acting in a way which would be a deterrent as far as the going up of prices in the country is concerned, but they are helping these things to go on.

I may mention in passing that- -I am sure that Shri D.P. Dhar* is at least publicly conscious of it,—that this monster of galloping inflation is going to destroy all his plans also. I doubt very much whether even the core of the Fifth Plan can be preserved and saved. If this kind of inflation is going to go on, it will upset everything and all planning and everything else. If Government proposes to save the core of the Fifth Plan, they should tell us how concretely they propose to do it in the face of this inflation which is taking place.

The consumer price index for industrial workers has gone up from 194 in March last year to 228 in May this year. What does this mean? It means that there is a sharp fall in the real wages of the working classes. This means that money wages may go up, but even if they go up in some cases, it would be fruitless, because the real value of the wages is all the time being depressed. Can you expect that there will not be industrial unrest? Can you expect that people will not protest some time or the other? Can you expect that *bandhs* will not take place? It is all very well to ask what the use of *bandh* is and it will not bring prices down. But what will bring prices down? Is it merely sitting at home and doing nothing and relying only on Government which is following this policy, which will bring down prices? The *bandh* is only a form of protest. What else are the people to do? Therefore, there is a wave of these *bandhs* taking place in different parts of the country. In West Bengal also, on the coming Friday, after waiting patiently for two years when there has been no *bandh* or anything of that kind there, the people are going to have a massive Statewide *bandh* because they have been driven to the last measure of desperation.

We speak also of drought in some areas. Admittedly, there has been drought in some areas and failure of rains. But, nevertheless, I find that despite drought, the production of foodgrains in 1972-73 was only about 6 million tonnes less than what it was in the previous year. So, if we talk so loudly about drought as if there has been some catastrophic fall, that is not correct, because in 1971-72, the production was 104.7 million tonnes, and in 1972-73 when drought has affected us, it has come down to 98 million tonnes, which is only about 6 million tonnes less. My point is that even if it be less than last year's production, if the available stock is procured, the prices can be held and the people can be saved from this monster of the blackmarket into which everybody is now willy-nilly being propelled.

---

* Referring to Shri D.P. Dhar, the then Minister of Planning.

So the root causes of this terrible crisis are these. First, reckless deficit financing. Of course, they will say 'Bangladesh war', 'payment as a result of the Pay Commission's recommendations' and so on and so forth. Nevertheless, the estimate of Shri Chavan who is an experienced, very senior and able Minister of the safe margin was only Rs. 250 crore of deficit financing in a year. It has gone upto Rs. 850 crore, and if you add to it Rs. 400 crore more which represents overdrafts drawn by the State Governments on the RBI, it comes to between Rs. 1200 and 1300 crore. This is not something which I am suddenly theorising about. I have no time to quote from many leading economists of the country who are also pointing out that this is the most dangerous thing that is taking place.

Secondly, there is no action on the Wanchoo Committee's Report. They said that every year Rs. 1400 crore of black money is being created in our economy. I say the major part of this money goes to hoard foodgrains and other essential commodities. If this menace of black money is not fought, we will never be able to destroy the power of these hoarders and blackmarketeers.

*** *** ***

Thirdly, there is the dubious role of the banks, including the nationalised banks. I know directives have been given to them not to advance credit it easily for purposes which may be described as speculation and hoarding. But I make the charge that these directives are not being carried out and the working of the nationalised banks should be gone into much more deeply. Large amounts of credit are still being advanced to these very parties and forces who are responsible for cornering commodities, foodgrains and other essential commodities, and for hoarding and black marketing.

The next thing is the half-hearted and weak-kneed implementation by Government of their very laudable decision to take over the wholesale trade in wheat. It is so weak-kneed and so half-hearted that from the very first day the Government allowed this powerful profiteer-*cum*-landlord combine to sabotage and scuttle it.

I do not want to go into the old controversy about marketed surplus and marketable surplus. That was the first floodgate which was opened. So if anybody is kind enough to bring a part of his grain to the market and actually markets it, the government procurement agency will operate on that only. Whatever he chooses not to bring to market but keeps hidden for further future hoarding and blackmarketing, Government is not bothered about that. A wonderful policy! No levy, no graduated levy. No levy on the big producers, no graduated levy even on producers according to the size of their holdings or production. No levy at all, and no association of the people with the implementation of this policy.

It is a gigantic decision taken. In a huge country of this size, you are going to take over the wholesale trade in wheat. And you think you can carry it out only with the help of district magistrates, SDOs and d*arogas* of police *thanas*, against these people who are going to resist this thing for their own economic interests. No attempt was made to mobilise the people and get their co-operation, have some form of popular committees or something like that to work along with the administrative machinery. Nothing was done, even where people do co-operate out of their own will, where peasants co-operate in many villages. There, the landlords take revenge on them by attacking and killing them as they have done in Bihar. Even today, I got a report from Shri Bhogendra Jha,* who has just come from there, that in that same Selibeli area where the Mahant was arrested some months ago last year, if you remember, for the murder of 12 landless labourers and poor peasants, in the same selibeli area, yesterday or the day before, there has been another savage attack carried out by the landlords in which several people have been killed because those peasants in an organised way were trying to co-operate with the procurement drive of the Government. So, a revenge has been taken on them by the landlords.

If I may, with your indulgence, just quote one or two comments which have been offered in the Press, which have been published by some leading economists like Shri V.N. Dandeker, Director of the Gokhale Institute, Dr. Ashok Mitra, the former Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India itself, Prof. Dantwala, Dr. Bright Singh, Member of the Tamil Nadu Planning Commission and Shri Chimanlal Patel, Gujarat Planning Minister, and so on.

*** *** ***

While leading economists have blamed heavy deficit financing in recent years and the failure of the Government's control mechanism for the present abnormal price rise, they have said many things. I cannot quote them all. They have suggested that the Government should procure the consumer goods at the source of production and sell them through a wide network of fair price shops so as to arrest the disease of price spiral. There is no other solution within the present framework, at least. The root cause of the present inflation, they say, is an attempt to eliminate poverty without touching the rich. This is the core of the matter. You want to *hatao* the *garibi* without touching the rich. How could it be done? Such a magical path has not been invented, I think, in the world.

Then Dr. Ashok Mitra, their own former Economic Adviser, blamed the failure of the Government's control mechanism for the current spurt in prices;

*Referring to Shri Bhogendra Jha, MP

when Government had stocks, it did not make an appropriate use of this to put down speculation. "On the contrary, some of the buffer-stocks were released during 1971-72 to private traders. Once the foodgrains prices started rising", he said, "everything else succumbs to that trend. Some of the groups and classes who benefit from the price rise have an inordinate hold on the Government and they are making full use of their political power."

Prof. Dantwala says that "if the prices of essential commodities in short supply were to be contained, there is no escape from compulsory levy on big producers and also imports if necessary." Dr. Mitra said, "While the bank rate has been raised by a mere one per cent, the margin of profit enjoyed by the rich farmers, traders and industrialists from the operations financed through bank credit was substantially higher".

*** *** ***

There is a consensus of views among so many people of different quarters as to what is happening and why it is happening.

This morning I found, although we did not reach the Question Hour, that a Statement was laid, giving the figures of procurement of wheat during the current *rabi* season. What a miserable show! And they must tell us why it is happening. Why, when the target in Haryana was 13 lakhs, they have procured only 5.64 lakhs? Why in Madhya Pradesh, when it was four lakhs, they have procured only 1.91 lakhs? In Uttar Pradesh, it was 18 lakhs target; they have procured only 7.50 lakhs. Only in Punjab, you can say with some satisfaction, out of a target of 33 lakhs, some 25.75 lakhs have been procured; at least they have not miserably failed. But what is happening to the others? The fact is that the big producers in Uttar Pradesh and other States, even they who call themselves Congressmen, many of them have just refused to part with their stocks. Despite appeals made by the Prime Minister and in the name of the Prime Minister by certain very eminent Ministers sent from here for this purpose to persuade them, in U.P. those people refused to part with their stocks unless procurement prices were substantially raised. In West Bengal , the State Government could not procure even half of its own target of rice, three lakh tonnes which they were supposed to procure. The Food Minister there says: 'I do not believe in coercion; I believe in methods of persuasion.' In the meantime, rice ration has been cut to 750 gms. and people are asked to buy rice in the open market at Rs. 4. After all no less a person than the General Secretary of the ruling party, not me, Shri Chandrajit Yadav, only the other day speaking at Gauhati said something which you should note. He will be conservative about his own troubles. Even he has admitted that inside the party, there is a big, strong and powerful block of reactionary elements and vested interests who are not allowing these things to be done: they

sabotage from within. How can you expect people to sit quiet and rely on the Government? If these are the diseases you must cure them and show to the people that you are doing something serious about it. In the face of the proposed *bandh*, Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray* is continuously sermonising to us there that he does not want strikes and we should not have *bandhs*. What should we do? Rely on the Government? They say that they are doing everything, but they are cutting the ration and refuse to procure from the big producers and rice millers and hoarders. Are we supposed to keep quiet and depend upon them? Keeping quiet for two years had led to the present misery. All the proclaimed assurances of the ruling party are being thrown to the winds. That is the trouble.

It is a matter of concern not only to the Opposition people; it is a matter of concern to millions of people who voted Congress and believed in their programme. There should be broad based unity of the people to see to it that those things which were promised were carried out and not allowed to be watered down or the Government is not allowed to retreat from them. The situation has come to such a pass. There should be no retreat under pressure. There are some parties in the Opposition who are one with the vested interests in the ruling party to whom Shri Chandrajit Yadav referred. There are many here, friends of the traders and big producers who are enemies of any idea of the take over of food trade.

But if the Government is going to continue in the line of retreat, the economy is faced with the threat of absolute collapse. They have to implement it firmly with popular co-operation. You must impose graduated levy. Otherwise there is no way of getting it done. Take it over and distribute, step by step, all essential articles. For goodness sake, use a little of the vast legal armoury you have built up at least to give some deterrent or exemplary punishment to some of the hoarders and profiteers. It may mean that you have to tread on the corns of people whom you do not want to tread on. You have to decide whether you are to go that way or take the country towards disaster. You should take action against black money. The Adjournment Motion has been brought because the situation has become really explosive. We are in a sense standing at the cross roads. There is dynamite in the economy because if we go on like this, whether it is planning for food or price, everything is going to be upset; everything will collapse. Therefore, I am warning the Government if they fail on the price and food front, it is not only a question of their party and their Government going down—it is on this issue they will go down if they go on the way they are going—but it will mean misery and suffering and starvation for millions of people in this country and the entire economy of the country will be disrupted and shattered.

*Referring to Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal.

Therefore, I think it is time that we censure the Government for what they have been doing as distinct from what they have been talking and promising of doing. That is why this Adjournment Motion has been brought. I hope it will get the support of different sections in this House, including those Congress friends who want to see that their declared programme is carried out and is not defeated. It is for them to decide what they should do. Why should I bother about it? The trouble is on account of this issue I cannot make common cause with Shri Piloo Mody or Shri Vajpayee because I know that they are fundamentally opposed to everything that this Government promises to do but is not doing under their pressure or the pressure of their friends.

*** *** ***

With these words, I move my Motion of Adjournment.

*** *** ***

#As we know, from experience, Shri Y.B. Chavan is an extremely clever man, and of course, he stole a march over me by ranging over the entire economic situation in the country, including industrial production, financial policies, deficit financing and so many other things. We did not have that advantage, nor did I have the time to launch a discussion on the entire economic situation facing the country.

The Adjournment Motion was limited specifically to two points. One was the failure to control the abnormal rise in prices of essential commodities. The words 'failure to control the abnormal rise in prices of essential commodities' were chosen carefully. The second is the failure to supply adequate quantities of foodgrains to the people at reasonable prices. The people that we are referring to are not the people only in the distressed areas or the drought-affected areas where relief operations have to be carried out. That may be more or less a normal thing from year to year, affecting one region of the country or another. Much play has been made about the fact that Government have spent so much money on giving relief to distressed people in drought-affected areas and so on.

My motion in referring to the failure to supply adequate quantities of foodgrains to people at reasonable prices indicates another abnormal feature which has developed now, namely that in a city like Patna or in a city like Calcutta,—these are not drought-affected or distressed areas—the ration shops are empty; wheat is not being supplied at all, and statutory rationing is being reduced to a miserable 750 gm. per head. No reply has been given to these things.

Replying to the debate on the Motion for Adjournment regarding abnormal rise in prices of essential commodities.

Also, incidentally this is the first time that it has been publicly stated that this wheat take-over and procurement has failed mainly because the wheat crop, the *rabi* crop, in those States where certain targets were fixed, the production had not come up to expectation. This is the first time that I have heard this.

*** *** ***

If it is a fact, then Government had better not go on concealing it until an Adjournment Motion comes.

I agree with Shri Y.B. Chavan only on this point that if they had not been able to procure even this 4 million tonnes which they have procured, the situation would have been even worse. That is a poor consolation, but I agree with him that if they had not taken this step and fulfilled the target 50 per cent or a little less than 50 per cent, the situation would have been much worse. Of course, it is necessary to say this, because there are friends on this side, Shri Piloo Mody and others, who would like to reverse the whole direction and take us back to complete decontrol, denationalisation, leaving the wholesale market in the hands precisely of those people who have controlled it for the last 26 years and played havoc with the lives of the people and also minted, I do not know how many thousand crores of black money out of this foodgrains trade.

That is all right. But why we want to censure the Government is that they have miserably failed to implement their own decision at a cost which the people are having to pay now. We are differing, I continue to differ with Shri Chavan, as to the principal reason for that failure. The principal reason is the fact that the measures of the Government have from the very beginning been completely half-hearted. When they look towards the people, the rising discontent of the people, the suffering of the people, all these demonstrations, strikes and so on which you may not like but which are facts, all the same, they realise that something must be done. Then they make a policy statement at Bidhan Nagar or somewhere else that 'we are going to take over the wholesale trade'. Very good, as far as the declaration goes. But when they look to the other side, to the people with whom they will have to cross swords to implement this thing, then, of course, there is a retreat. This is the whole trouble. When I say 'half-hearted', this is the meaning of the word. Shri Chavan cannot deny that a large, solid powerful block or lobby of vested interests, both inside the Congress and outside, has mounted a terrific campaign during the last two months to see that this thing does not go through. Inside the Congress also—I want to ask this question, a lot of things are being said about the procurement price.

*** *** ***

I know when we try to help procurement, our peasants are killed, as I said earlier.

The procurement price should be raised. This is the demand made by many people. Of course, Shri Chavan has replied to it. I also would like to know that if Rs. 76 per quintal was more or less satisfactory to bring out the wheat in Punjab to very near the target—after all, there are also fairly well-to-do *kisans* in Punjab who are using tractors, electric pumps, fertilisers and so on—why is it not satisfactory elsewhere? I want to ask this, particularly in regard to the western districts of UP, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. It is the same *kisan* there.

So there was organised resistance. My point is that the organised resistance which has come from certain Opposition parties is not the main factor that is a factor which can be expected from the day that the All-India Foodgrains Dealers Association called for a strike in the *mandis* and held a demonstration in the streets of Delhi; from that day, we know there are certain forces who will try to oppose it. My contention is that the main stumbling block has come from within the ruling party itself. The State of which Shri Chavan speaks, of which he was at one time the Chief Minister and the Food Minister, has got very similar features in its agriculture to some of these other wheat-producing States where the rich farmers and big landed interests, even if they happen to be Congressmen, are determined just as the Jan Sangh and other people, to blackmail Government into increasing the procurement price. Therefore, they will not hand over their stocks. What has been done about it? What are they going to do about it? I take it that they are not taking any decision to go back on this decision. Of course, he did not say anything whether the takeover of rice from the next session is going to be adhered to or not, although the Working Committee of the Congress has repeated the decision. But I have seen the performance in West Bengal of the Government as regards procurement of only 3 lakh tonnes of rice. There they have failed because they did not want to really come to grips with the situation and they did not want to annoy or provoke these powerful landed interests and also the big hoarders and traders. So there is no use blaming only the Jan Sangh for it.

*** *** ***

Shri Chavan said a lot about the need for more production and all that—the usual thing which we have heard so many times. Has it solved the problem ever? Has production never increased? Have the workers and peasants in this country not increased the production over the years of practically everything? I know you are very happy now that there is a good jute crop. So am I. I have seen it growing in the fields. People say it may be a bumper crop. What is the result? The price of raw jute has begun to fall catastrophically.

Shri Devi Prasad Chattopadhyaya* came and announced that the Jute Corporation of India will now start thinking of making a plan for buying up at least 10 lakh bales of raw jute at a certain price, but he admits that they have not got the mechanism or the resources; that they have not got the warehouses; they have not got the purchasing centres; they have not got trained staff to grade and buy the jute. But anyway. That is a good intention which of course may remain on paper just like the take-over of wheat.

Please** do not go into the question of cotton and jute. I have raised it on an earlier occasion; the way you treat cotton you have never treated jute because this is a matter concerning the economy of eastern India. Now, there is a very good jute crop; the point is, the price is crashing and the cultivators are facing depression nowadays and they do not know what is going to happen. So, it is not so simple also, Shri Chavan; please do not oversimplify this thing about production. Greater production does not necessarily lead to that type of fall in prices which is beneficial to the poorer people.

I would like to refer to this question about power cuts. This is the major cause today for the industrial setback. But what has the monsoon got to do with thermal power plants: May I know? The majority of power plants in this country are not hydro-electric plants. They are thermal power plants. Let me tell you that the managements of several thermal power plants, both in the public sector and in the private sector, have been publicly complaining that even now, after the nationalisation of the coal mines, the quality of coal that they are getting, which is required for the thermal power plants, is below standard and unsatisfactory. Who is responsible for this? Is the Opposition responsible? I want to ask. When the mines were owned by private companies, then for the sake of profiteering, we could understand that they used to mix up different qualities of inferior coal and send them there. Can there be any reason for it now? The Government must find out these bottlenecks; now we are not prepared to hear these excuses.

Lately, some statistics have been published by the Labour Minister here which prove conclusively that in the past year the number of production stoppages as due to strikes is far less than the number of production stoppages caused by the employers who are deliberately imposing lockouts for various reasons on their factories. What steps are you taking against them?

This price rise that you have sanctioned in the case of *dalda*, of 75 paise per kilogram, done by you, by the Government, who is the direct beneficiary of it? A firm like Hindustan Lever, which is the biggest manufacturer of *dalda*

*Referring to Shri D.P. Chattopadhyaya, the then Minister of Commerce.
**Referring to Shri Y.B. Chavan's query, "What about cotton?"

in this country. These big monopoly firms manufacturing *dalda* are coming and pleading that the price of raw inputs has gone up and "therefore, give us a rise". And promptly, the Government says, "All-right; put up the price by 75 paise per kilo". I do not understand; this Hindustan Lever is also manufacturing so many other products such as soaps, hair-oils, shampoos and so on—toilet goods. Even these goods cannot be got at the standard price outside. There is no fixed price. You cannot even introduce a mechanism for this that at least they must be compelled to put up some pricelist in every shop showing the standard price for things like 'Lux' toilet soap and other standard things like that. Even that is not there. There are 10 different brands sold at 10 different prices. What control mechanism is there in this country? When we talk about it, then you say, "Oh, you want democracy to function and at the same time you want the *danda* to function." "Then, what do you want? Do you want democracy or do you want *danda*?" Nothing is happening. Please make up your mind about this. If you say, "No *danda* in our democracy," very good. Let the people know that they are going to be thrown to the wolves. If any *danda* is necessary with your idea of democracy, then say so. Do not talk of socialism and socialistic pattern of society and this and that, give it up, why talk about them? Then mixed economy? Yes. But what is the prescription of that mixture? Which way is it going?

I want to end up by saying that I am not at all convinced by these arguments which have been put forward. The central question which I had raised has been evaded. Granted your drought, granted your everything, granted your unforeseen shortages, is it not all the more reason why precisely in those difficult days the available stocks must be procured and distributed more or less equitably, so that there are no starvation deaths at the one end and people mint black money at the other end! That is all I am asking. In years of shortage, this kind of policy of take over of distribution through a proper machinery becomes all the more necessary, if you want to save people from distress and calamity.

But the argument given here is just the opposite. As far as I can find out, the implication is that only in a year of good production, bumper harvest, our distribution machinery and our takeover plans can work. This is contrary to reality. It is precisely at this time that you need this thing to be worked out much more comprehensively and implemented and that is where the Government has failed totally.

Therefore, the point on which we had brought this Adjournment Motion, has not been met at all and therefore it does not lie in Shri Chavan's mouth to accuse us for not cooperating—excuse my saying so. Where is the room for cooperation? So many suggestions have been made here and outside, without number. Those suggestions are all thrown into the waste paper basket. Where

are the trade unions to cooperate? Are you trying to tell me that industrial production has not increased? In Bombay some stunt has been enacted about seven-day week. I want to know: are you interested in production in the gimmick of Sunday working? If you are interested in production in the textile mills, our unions will tell you how to do it without making the workers to give up their common holiday on Sunday. But you have to do certain things. You have to work out a whole new system of democratic industrial relations and implement it and not talk only about participation in the management in the floor level. All these things are being discussed. Promises and assurances were given that a new law was going to be brought and this and that. But what has happened to all that? It has evaporated. This way nothing will happen. I am not convinced of the argument brought forward. It is not a question of being a pessimist. If these things continue, if this policy is continued in this fashion, I am afraid the country is going to be in for calamitous times.

People of this country will certainly not keep quiet. In some places they may be resigned to it. They will just suffer and keep quiet but in some places they will not. That is the only difference. We shall be with them wherever they are and see what happens.

IMPERATIVE OF NATIONALISATION OF BANKS*

Mr. Chairman, I have been tempted to speak a few words on this Resolution mainly because of some observations which were made a couple of days ago by the Union Finance Minister on this subject in the debate on the No-confidence Motion. Before I come to them I must add my voice of congratulations to the hon. lady member** who has moved this Resolution and has given to the House an opportunity to debate it at a time when it is no longer an academic question, when not only people in this House but outside this House are coming to regard it as a matter of life and death for themselves and for the future of the country.

On the 17th April this year the bank employees all over the country observed an All-India Day only in support of this demand of nationalisation. On the 13th September next a petition is going to be presented to this Parliament in the name of, I cannot say exactly yet, but perhaps ten million citizens of this country throughout the length and breadth of this land demanding that banks should be nationalised along with certain other enterprises so that the necessary resources that this country requires for defence and development purposes are found. Therefore, I would request hon. members to realise that this is no longer just an exercise in economic academics confined to some hon. members of Parliament. It has become a standard, a battlecry, a slogan throughout the length and breadth of this land now.

*** *** ***

My hon. friend, Shri S.M. Banerjee***, has said more than once that the hon. Deputy Minister is mentally prepared for nationalisation. I have not got the good fortune which Shri Banerjee has of entering into the mind of the hon. Deputy Minister, but I know what senior members of the Government have said on the floor of this House regarding this demand of nationalisation and I would at least request the hon. Deputy Minister, when he replies, to deal with economics. On this issue at least let us deal with economics and not with politics and ideologies.

---

* Speaking on a Resolution regarding Nationalisation of Banks, moved by Smt. Subhadra Joshi; *L.S. Deb.*, 23 August 1963.

** Referring to Smt. Subhadra Joshi, MP

*** Referring to Shri S.M. Banerjee, MP

I am confident to that extent that perhaps the reply that we will get from him will be more satisfactory in that sense than we get from his senior Minister. His knowledge of economics really horrified me when he dealt with this question.

The hon. Shri Morarji Desai brought forward three arguments. I will not deal with all the other questions that have been covered by so many hon. members here. Apart from dismissing it as an ideological fetish of the Communists and so on and so forth—but unfortunately for him it is being supported by every section of the House; so, let us lay aside ideologies for the moment—one of the three arguments that he brought forward was that after all, the deposits in the banks will not be his if he took them over; so, what is the use of telling him that there are deposits of Rs. 1,500 crore or Rs. 1,600 crore in the banks. I take it that they are Rs. 1,400 crore or Rs. 1,300 crore leaving aside the Rs. 600 crore which are in the State Bank of India. He said "Those deposits are not mine". Then, are the deposits the private property of the Birlas, the Tatas and the Dalmia-Jains? Surely not.

I do not want to give a lecture on banking to anybody. I do not presume to do so. But anybody understands what bank deposits are and how they are used for economic operations and how they are being used by the private owners of the banks. It is not as though these deposits are lying untouched in the vaults of the banks. They are being used. For what purpose are they being used today and for what purpose could they be used if the Government takes them over?

Many hon. members have already said that today these deposits are used, if I may say so, to sabotage the very basis of the Plan. The hon. Prime Minister told us yesterday that the unique feature of this country is that this is the first experiment in combining planning with democracy. But here is an example where I would suggest that if you want to combine the fundamental objectives of economic planning with democracy in the matter of leaving the bank magnates in the names of democracy to operate the banks as they wish, things come to a pass where one contradicts the other and where the leaving of these huge resources in the hands of private capitalists who own the banks means that you will permit them to operate in a way which destroys the very roots and fundamentals of planning.

We have been told here that one objective of the Plan is that the price line must be held. Can it be held when these monstrous deposits are employed by these people for all sorts of operations of hoarding, speculation and profiteering? Who does not know it? But for these banks advances which are so readily available to these gentlemen we will not have had this phenomenon in the Indian economy of Haridas Mundhra, Dalmia-Jain and so on. You read

the reports. We know them. None of these operations could be carried out without the power of the banks behind them.

Shri Patel* told us a lot. He waxed eloquent about incentives for the farmers. Of course, but which farmers did he mean? Did he mean the primary cultivator? I want to know when grain is cornered, when raw jute is cornered, when the primary cultivator is forced to part with his produce because he has no means of holding on to it, when the big wholesalers send their middlemen and their dealers out to corner huge stocks, how is it done except with the power of bank advances behind them? Therefore, the price line cannot be held. Real justice cannot be done to the primary cultivator. He cannot get the incentive which he requires. Somebody else may get the incentive. That is a different matter.

Another objective of the Plan is to conserve, husband and acquire foreign exchange. Yet it is these banks which are behind this whole racket of under-invoicing and over-invoicing which is going on. Who does not know it? I have no time to go into all these details but Shri Bhagat** knows, if any body knows, that at long last when the crisis of the Plan has brought us to a pass when the Special Police Establishment and the customs officials are having to at least carry out a few raids on very big business houses in the city from where I come, there must be some *prima facie* evidence to suspect that very big under-invoicing and over-invoicing operations are being carried on. It is not possible without the foreign exchange banks and the other banks to which we are giving foreign exchange licences.

Therefore this whole question. The social objective of the Plan is that the concentration of wealth must be reduced. But leaving the private banks in the hands of these big private business houses means that you are really encouraging the concentration of wealth. The greatest expression, the single expression, of a capitalistic economy of the concentration of wealth in a few hands are the banking institutions. If these deposits are employed for this purpose, can they not, be employed for purposes in the interest of the nation and in the interest of the Plan? If the banks are taken over by Shri Desai—he does not seem to think so—he says, "deposits will not be mine". Then, whose will they be? It is the bulk of these deposits which are always used for economic purposes. They are only being used at present to sabotage the Plan, to swell up private profits, to hoard wealth in the hands of a few big capitalists, to defraud the country of foreign exchange, to carry out big *phatka* operations on the stock market and so on and so forth.

---

* Referring to Shri P.R. Patel, MP

**Referring to Shri B.R. Bhagat, the then Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Finance.

The second argument was that the profits of the banks are only Rs. 6 crore.

*** *** ***

Rupees $6^1/_2$ crores or something like that. I am not bothered about the profits, although these figures are wrong. The profits are much more. They are about Rs. 10 crore or so if I leave the foreign exchange banks and the State Bank. If I include them, they come to Rs. 17 crore or Rs. 18 crore after tax.

*** *** ***

In any case, my case is not this that only the profits will go into the hands of the Government.

*** *** ***

The strange argument that he used was regarding compensation. I wish Shri Bhagat had briefed him a little better. By what argument did he say that we will have to pay a hundred crores of rupees as compensation? The Government itself has laid down a certain basis for computing compensation and that basis, as far as I know, is that the highest market rate which is quoted in the share markets, stock exchanges, is taken for the last three years, the average of which is worked out. That is the basis on which compensation is computed. If that is done in this case, what will we find? The paid up capital of these banks is Rs. 29.18 crore and the compensation which should be paid on that basis would come to Rs. 47.38 crore. How did he get a figure of Rs. 100 crore?

Now, we find that between 1947 and 1961, these banks distributed as dividends alone a sum of Rs. 34.53 crore. This was distributed as dividends. The reserves of the banks amounted to Rs. 24.22 crore. This is quite apart from the secret reserves which the banks are permitted to keep. They would not remain secret any more, at least not secret to the Government if the Government took them over. Therefore, it seems that the compensation, at the most, of Rs. 47 crore of Rs. 50 crore would be required where the reserves already come to almost Rs. 25 crore. Am I to take it that even after paying the interest on deposits, Rs. 1,500 crore which are there, will not yield a return of even 5 per cent? If the yield is even 5 per cent, then we will get Rs. 75 crore per year. If I insist that the banks should be taken over without paying compensation, perhaps Shri Desai can charge me with being doctrinaire. I say, "All right, you pay them compensation". You pay them Rs. 47 crore as compensation to which morally, I think, they have no right. But as a matter of economics if you want to pay them, you pay them Rs. 47 crore. We can pay. We can pay out of the reserves, out of the secret reserves and out of the earnings of Rs. 75 crore which will accrue every year at the rate of at least 5 per cent on a total deposit of Rs. 1,500 crore. I say, you

pay them that compensation and let them go. But let the Government take them over. Let these vast resources come into the hands of the Government which wants to make its Plan a success. This is the key point, the key strategic point which must be occupied in the whole economy by the body which wants to carry out planning. If it is not done, I say, Sir, the whole planning will be reduced to mockery as it is being reduced to and, therefore, it is from this point of view mainly that I would suggest that the Ministry and the Government should seriously consider this matter and not commit these vast amounts to be spent as they are being done.

*** *** ***

I conclude by just drawing the attention of the House to the fact that out of these deposits it was found that nearly Rs. 100 crore, Rs. 95.88 crore, are advanced by the banks against food stocks. That means what? That is a polite way of saying to the hoarders to corner the stocks and hold on to them so that the prices can be raised in the market. Rs. 367.62 crore were advanced against stock exchanges and bullion. This is the way public deposits are being employed at present. Why is Shri Desai so shy and so unwilling to take them over and use these deposits to better purposes so that the country and the Plan can be safe? This is a question basically of planning of resources. It would save the poor people of this country from having to pay Rs. 40 crore as compulsory deposits. There will be no need for it. It will save the lower income brackets from having to pay this huge surcharge which has been imposed on them this year. There will be no need for the Government to put these unbearable impositions on the ordinary common working man. All that money and much more could be derived out of these sources. therefore, I whole-heartedly support this Resolution and I hope the House will do its best to try and carry it out.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the name of social control, the only thing which is sought to be controlled through this Bill is the trade union rights of the employees, nothing else. The Finance Minister, over the last year or more in various statements which he was been making in public and also at meetings with his own party members, was trying to explain that the demand which had arisen on a very wide scale for nationalisation of banks was unfounded and misconceived and that the purpose which was sought to be achieved through nationalisation would actually be achieved much more effectively through the Bill that he was going to bring for what he described as social control over banks. Now we have this Bill before us as it has finally emerged from the Select Committee.

Some hon. members here have argued as though the question is whether the powers which already existed with the Government or with the Reserve Bank were adequate or not to regulate the functioning of banks. By that criterion they have sought to support or oppose this Bill. But I would just like to remind you that those people who have been advocates of nationalisation, I do not think are all leftists by any means or members of leftists parties. I remember, the first Private Member's Resolution advocating nationalisation of banks was moved in this House not by any member of the Opposition but by a member of the hon. Deputy Prime Minister's party.

What is it that they have in mind? There are certain directives of policy laid down, directive principles in the Constitution which enjoin upon the Government and the State to take such measures as will prevent the concentration of wealth and concentration of economic power in a few hands. Apart from that, the whole history of our last 15 or 20 years of economic development has shown that unless certain things are done, it will be impossible for this country, placed as it is and with its underdeveloped economy, to advance towards the goal which the nation has set for itself and which this Parliament has set for itself. Those things were that the link between a few big monopoly houses and the private commercial banks should be broken. Secondly, further concentration of economic power achieved through the mechanism of private commercial banks should be curbed. Thirdly, the

* Participating in the discussion on the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1967; *L.S. Deb.*, 5 August 1968.

price line should be held and speculation in the markets should be controlled and checked.

Fourthly, the domestic resources available in the country should be mobilised, as far as possible, in the interest of planned development of the economy. I do not know whether the Government or the hon. Deputy Prime Minister still adheres to these objectives. Whether he adheres to these objectives or not, I do not know. Whether he wants to hold the price-line or not, whether he wants to mobilise resources to the maximum extent possible within the country for the purpose of planned development or not, whether he wants to suppress speculation on a large-sale that is going on in the markets of this country, particularly, in the foodgrains market, whether he wants to curb further concentration of economic power effectively, that is for him, to say. It is by this touchstone that we are judging this Bill and by the application of that test, the only conclusion to which we can come is that the Bill is nothing but a gigantic hoax which has been perpetrated on the people of the country in the name of social control which is shown to be something even more effective than nationalisation. Therefore, I want to make it quite clear that we hold to our view that nothing but nationalisation of the private commercial banks can achieve the objectives which were laid down both in the Constitution as well as in the economic policy resolution accepted by this House and also agitated for by so many different sections of opinion in the country, irrespective of party affiliations.

First of all, I would like to point out that this Bill, as it has emerged, is, after all, inspired by whom. May I take the liberty of reading to you the first half a dozen lines of the memorandum which was submitted to the Select Committee of which I happened to be a member on behalf of the Indian Banks Association? These are the people whom one is trying to control. Control is to be over these people who run the Indian Banks Association, that is, the big private bankers of this country. In their memorandum to the Select Committee, they open by saying:

"We have the honour to observe that most of the provisions.....

—This is addressed to Shri Morarji Desai—

> "...of the Banking Laws Amendment Bill, 1967 introduced in the Lok Sabha on the 23rd December are in conformity with the conclusions arrived at in the informal meetings of the representatives of our Association with you."

So, the cat is out of the bag. I am quoting from the Indian Banks Association memorandum addressed to you. In the very first six lines, they are saying that you and we sat together in a series of informal meetings, we

made certain suggestions and you have pleased us very much by drafting a bill, the provisions of which are in conformity with the conclusions arrived at in those meetings. This Bill is the off-spring of Shri Morarji Desai and the Indian Banks Association.

*** *** ***

I only indicate one or two of the things to show why I am saying that this Bill is really a hoax. For example, there is a provision for control over loans and advances to Directors and their concerns. Of course, I have got a chart here, a statement, which has been laid on the Table only this morning in reply to a question by my friend, Shri Nitiraj Singh Chaudhary, giving information and figures regarding the total amount of loans, including temporary advances granted, during the year, to the companies or firms in which the Directors of banks are interested. I cannot quote all these because I have no time, but the figures are going up from 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966 and 1967—from Rs. 228 crore in 1963 to Rs. 378 crore in 1967. These are the amounts which are being given as loans and advances to companies or firms in which the Directors of banks are interested. These are his own figures, and there are many other interesting figures about loans given to Directors, Managers, officers and so on. What I mean to say is this. Certainly the objective of the Bill should be to put some check, some control, on this; that should be the whole object, but the way the provisions of the Bill have emerged, there are 1001 loopholes and everybody knows how easy it is to evade.

One point, strangely enough, was mentioned by Shri Dandekar himself because he is feeling it a bit inconvenient as the Director of the Punjab National Bank, he will have to come to some other bank, some brother bank, to get a loan from there for one of the firms in which he is interested; he cannot get it any more from the Punjab National Bank itself; a certain amount of inconvenience is caused now.

But I want to point out this: is this an effective prohibition? All that it will lead to is that there will be more co-ordination and co-operation between different banks and different Directors on different Boards—I will loan you from my bank and you loan me from your bank. The result is going to be not less concentration but more cartelisation and more concentration among the various big banks and their Directors, each arranging to mutually accommodate the other. What kind of control is this, I do not know.

Then there is a very simple thing which you can understand, for example, one of the memoranda we received in the Select Committee has this to say:

> "The controlling interest of the Punjab National Bank Ltd. is held by Seth Shanti Prasad Group. He has his company in the name of Rohtas

> Industries and one of his sons is a Director in the Punjab National Bank Ltd. In order to make his Rohtas Industries eligible for loan from the Punjab National Bank Ltd. he would see that his son, who is a Director in the Punjab National Bank Ltd., is not made a Director in the Rohtas industries....."

That is all. The result will be that the Rohtas Industries, though they are managed and controlled by the same group, will be able to get the loan from the Punjab National Bank. What is the difficulty, I do not know. It is such a simple matter to see that these provisions are not worth the paper they are written on as far as control goes.

There are so many types of loans—loans given on clean credit. There were examples given. This practice is going on and there is no way of stopping that in this Bill.

Then there are advances against foodgrains. I just went to the Library to see the figures. On an average, about Rs. 35 to 40 crore every year are advanced by banks for trade in foodgrains alone. In the bad year of 1966, when there was a bad harvest and when there was shortage—when there is shortage, there is more speculation and more attempt to corner the scarce grains and push up the prices,—in the year ending 31 March 1966, advances against foodgrains by the private banks went up to over Rs. 70 crore. This is used for speculative purposes, for keeping the price line high. There is no way of controlling it under this Bill.

Only three days ago we saw in the papers a news that a big block of shares held by the LIC in the IISCO has been cornered by the Goenka group. How it has been cornered? You will find that the shareholders who did the transaction have, first of all, been given a big loan by a certain bank, and they have managed to work this deal. It is not just a question of shibboleth, repeating what has been said by somebody. That is why I say, it is impossible to get over these things unless we nationalise the banks. It is useless to tinker with the problem like this.

Then you know what amendments have been made. The originai Bill has been worsened, I will say, in some respects by the Select Committee itself. Take, for example, the new definition of 'small-scale industrial concern.' So many tears are being shed for small scale industry here and it is said that they should be given credit. But what has been done? The definition has been altered in such a way that I do not know what small-scale industry this is going to be. In the new definition, a 'small-scale industrial concern' has been defined as a concern which has an investment of upto Rs. 20 lakh in machinery alone. Only such concerns as conform to this definition will be entitled to credit facilities under the new Bill.

Then there is the question of substantial interest. There was a definition as to what would be taken to mean controlling interest. There also it has been amended under the pressure of some friends. 'Substantial interest' has been re-defined as control on the amount of paid up capital of Rs. 5 lakh or 10 per cent, whichever is less. Formerly, it was Rs. 5 lakh and 5 per cent; now it is Rs. 5 lakh and 10 per cent.

I have no time to explain these things in detail, that there is no way here of controlling the actual people who are holding the banking industry in their grip and manipulating it and running it for their own purposes.

As for the proposal to have whole-time Chairman, I charge the Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister with this that during this intervening period, when the Bill was drafted and was being discussed in the country and so on and during the time that would lapse before it became legislation, he has utilised it to advise these banks to see to it quickly that they forestall the Act by appointing in most cases their old, existing General Managers as whole-time Chairmen. This has been done in a whole series of banks. Those very gentlemen who had been General Managers of these banks for years together have now, suddenly, overnight, been appointed as full-time Chairman. I want to know whether they can be counted upon by this country to bring to light the malpractices or any other corrupt practices which these banks have been indulging in. Will they not be interested in suppressing facts, in hiding them? People with proper ability should have been brought from outside, but the same old people have been put in the saddle.

*** *** ***

Now I come to Section 36AD. As far as the other control measures are concerned, I repeat that they are nothing but an eye-wash and a big hoax on this country, and no amount of such measures can be a substitute for nationalisation. Some friends have rightly alluded to the powers of the Reserve Bank of India, because the Bank has had vast powers all this time. It is not for lack of power that the Reserve Bank has not been able to check or control or catch these people who have been indulging in malpractices and embezzlements of government bonds and securities—there is a big case going on at the moment, the Finance Minister knows about it; the Bank has plenty of powers but these powers have never been used. Shri Dandeker is scared stiff of the fact that a Part has been introduced, Part IIC, which he calls nationalisation by the back-door, because the Government is taking power to take over a Bank which goes on flouting the directives of the Reserve Bank. I can understand his apprehension, but I can assure him, even if Shri Desai cannot, that that power will remain on paper and will never be used. That is proved by the whole experience and history of all these years.

Finally about Clause 36 AD, I am grateful to the friends who have raised their voice of protest, opposition and criticism against this Clause from various points of view, but I must point out one thing. First of all, as somebody has correctly said, this particular Clause should not really, in all conscience, have anything to do with a Bill of this type which is meant, as stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, to weaken the links between monopoly houses and banks, and to provide credit facility to sectors which have been deprived or neglected so far. How in that Bill this thing can come in, I would like to know. I may tell the Government that the entire organised trade union movement of this country does not regard this as a matter between the bank employees and the banks, between the bank employees and the Finance Minister. This is the thin end of the wedge which is sought to be brought in for the first time. For example, there is the Major Port Trust Act in this country for the administration and control of the ports. Tomorrow, the Minister of Transport can come forward and say that he wants to put in a Section in that Act that in all Ports and Docks employees must be controlled in this way, that they cannot go on strike or hold demonstrations. Is there anything to prevent it once this goes through? The Industries (Development and Regulations) Act is an omnibus Act for the regulation of all industries in this country. What is there to prevent a new Section being inserted by the Government in that Act tomorrow saying that in all industrial premises throughout the country this kind of regulation will apply? It is fantastic. Therefore, I would like to know what the view of the hon. Labour Minister is on this. I am unable to get any clear reply from him, because there is the tripartite Indian Labour Conference and the Standing Labour Committee of that Conference which meet every year and there certain solemn covenants and conventions have been entered into that no new major legislation will be introduced affecting employer-employee relationship unless it is first discussed there and processed through that body. He somersaults over that and brings it here. What does the Labour Minister say about that? I do not think he can possibly approve of this kind of thing. So this is a very dangerous precedent for suppressing the legal rights of the employees everywhere.

For example, he told us in the Select Committee that he was the last man who would interfere with the rights of employees to strike, but if you read the wording of this Section, it means that if a strike takes place within the premises of a bank, even a pen-down strike which is very common now, or a sit-down strike, it will come within the mischief of this Section, though the Supreme Court has held that such strikes are legitimate. Let him think over the legal implications of it too. I hope he will.

Then it bans peaceful picketing. In respect of strike outside the bank also, it prevents them from carrying on peaceful picketing which is a long established right which the employees will not give up.

Let Shri Desai know, I do not know if he knows,—I did not know till a few days ago—that even in a country like the Philippines, a great democracy, I think, under the umbrella of the United States,—he goes sometimes to Manila, I find in the papers, I have never had the good luck to go there—there is a law which says that anybody, including a police officer, who assists or encourages black legs to go into the premises of a strike-bound establishment in order to break the strike will be penalised and punished, and the police officer is liable to be demoted and dismissed.

Where are we, I do not know. Somebody has just now correctly raised the question that this is a flagrant case of discrimination against one particular section of employees only.

In this introductory remarks the other day—I was horrified listening to him—he said that the existing standing orders of the banks were not enough. By a bilateral agreement between the employees and the employers, the agreement on standing orders was entered into for three years and was given legislative sanction and registered under the relevant Act also. Under those orders any bank employee who is guilty of misconduct—all are defined there—can be punished to the extent of losing his job; he can be dismissed. But the Finance Minister now comes and says: this is not enough; he must be put in jail. He has now introduced a new criminal offence. It is a bunch of criminals—who are called bank employees—who run the affairs of the bank in this country; that is how he views them. Not content with making them lose their jobs, he wants them to be prosecuted and put in jail also.

A spokesman of the Indian Banks Association appeared before the Select Committee. I do not want to name him; a whole lot of them came. I asked him this question: would you like to see one of your employees prosecuted and put in jail according to this new Bill? He replied: I cannot speak for all my colleagues, but speaking for myself, I should feel ashamed of myself if one of my employees is charged under this provision. This is a fantastic state of affairs.

In the memorandum of the same association, they congratulate the Minister for having accepted their suggestions. With respect to section 36AD, they say there: please modify it suitably so as to simplify the procedure for taking disciplinary action without the necessity of obtaining a certificate from the Reserve Bank. This was promptly done in the Select Committee. Anybody can go and prosecute them and put them in jail. Of course there is no punishment for all those people who have been embezzling money and indulging in malpractices and cheating depositors. Not one of them has seen the inside of a jail yet. But the bank employees are threatened with prosecution and imprisonment, in addition to losing their jobs. I still plead with him, even at this stage, not to ride the high horse, not to stand on false prestige,

because he has pledged to get through this legislation and to get it through his majority. Let him reconsider it.

There is a brief reference in section 54 AA to Reserve Bank employees. It gives power to the Reserve Bank authorities to transfer the Reserve Bank employees to any other place they like without giving them the right to deputation allowance. If they are sent on deputation to any other establishment, they are told that they will not get any deputation allowance and that they will not get anything more than what they have been getting at the present time. This is a gross injustice. He should reconsider this.

We cannot support this Bill in its present form. It is an absolute travesty and mockery of nationalisation. I was surprised to find that hon. members from his party who had clamoured for nationalisation are now congratulating him for this Bill which is a complete fraud.

THE PUBLIC FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS LAW (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1975*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have only a few remarks to make regarding this Bill because we had a very prolonged and fruitful discussion in the Joint Committee to which the hon. Minister has referred. Certain amendments to the original draft Bill have been incorporated which are definitely an improvement.

Nevertheless, the main point which I wish to make for the record is that even after hearing the hon. Minister just now, I am not really able to appreciate what substantial difference in the position is going to be brought about by the main provisions of this Bill. It is a question of re-structuring the financial institutions. That is true in respect mainly of two things. One is, transferring Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) from the Reserve Bank family to a somewhat independent position directly under the Banking Department of the Ministry of Finance and, secondly, the capital of this Bank will all be held henceforth by the Central Government, the existing subscribed capital and any capital which is further subscribed in future by the Central Government. All this will be held by the Central Government.

The point that we have been trying to make out is whether this structural change was at all so necessary as to be warranted by the development which has taken place over the years. The hon. Minister has not said that the IDBI, as a part of the Reserve Bank family, has not been able to discharge its functions or has had any difficulty in discharging its functions so long. If that case had been made out. I could have understood that it is in order to make the IDBI more efficient, more effective and to remove certain obstacles or handicaps or difficulties in the way of its functioning that we have to bring about re-structuring. But that argument has not been given by the Government at any stage. Therefore, I am not surprised that some people have brought forward an argument or advanced a suspicion, if you like to call it, that for those parties which are likely to be the main beneficiaries from the IDBI or other credit institutions it will be easier for them to get loans through the IDBI which is not subervient to the Reserve Bank but which is directly under the Ministry of Finance.

---

* Taking part in the discussion on the Public Financial Institutions Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1975; *L.S. Deb.*, 5 August 1975.

That suspicion has been expressed, for example, in this note of dissent which my friend Mathew Kurien has appended to the Report, I do not know whether this is a fact. This was discussed in the Committee but I, at least was not able to get much light on that. What is the basic difference which is going to be brought about? Previously, there was a common Board of Directors between the Reserve Bank and the IDBI and now the IDBI will have its own separate Board of Directors. The only improvement I find, from my point of view, is that a provision has been made to include two employees of the Bank itself in the Board. We had quite a discussion on that also. I personally do not feel that the presence of employees on the Board of such an institution is meant for the purpose of agitating their particular demands as employees; that is not the idea at all. All this discussion was of course going on even before the emergency was declared, and after the emergency was promulgated and the Prime Minister came forward with a 21 point economic programme we find that this is universally sought to be applied—*i.e.* workers' or employees' participation in management being given some meaningful shape now, in the days of emergency. It was precisely from that point of view that we have been asking for employees' representatives being put on the Board—not that they are going to sit there and bargain with other Directors for bonus or dearness allowance; that is not the idea at all. Those are Trade Union jobs which, if necessary, can be represented or agitated through the Trade Unions. But the presence of the workers on the Board is because we feel—and I am sure the Government also now feels—that it is very necessary in the national interest that workers' and employees' level of thinking and consciousness should not be confined within the framework of what we call 'economism'—that is, their being concerned only with the day to day demands as workers and nothing else. I think that, as a Trade Unionist, I may myself admit that this has been one of the basic weaknesses and draw backs of the Trade Union movement of the country also. As such, we have to raise the level of employees and workers above their own demands. Even if they are legitimate and justified, it is not enough and particularly in organisations and institutions within the public sector, it is absolutely essential that organised workers and employees must also feel that they have got a state in this public sector—something which is built up by public funds and which is not the property or outcome of the efforts of some individual capitalist or big-moneyed persons. Therefore, they also must contribute ideas, suggestions, constructive criticisms and so on for the better functioning of that particular institution. It is only if the entire Trade Union movement also takes up that kind of attitude that the workers themselves will be able to play a much more important and leading and positive role in the whole economic development of the country.

I am very glad that, ultimately, this thing which was not included in the original draft Bill, was accepted in a certain form in this Bill and I am very

glad that Shri C. Subramaniam* has also just now assured the House that the procedure of selection or nomination will be more or less something similar to that which is being done in the case of commercial banks which were nationalised. I am satisfied with that. I didn't mean by 'election' that they should be directly elected and put on the Board. I don't want to go into the details of the procedures, but the one which is followed in the other banks should be followed here too.

The other important point which he also referred to just now is the incorporation of this clause in Chapter II, Section 2, where it refers to the Industrial Development Bank of India as the principal financial institution for coordinating—then these words were introduced—or "in conformity with national priorities". The working of institutions engaged in financing, promoting or developing industry. This is a very small inclusion, but to us it is quite an important matter, because national priorities are defined from time to time by the Government and they will continue to be done. Sometimes those national priorities or policy statements are brought before the parliament for Parliament's consideration and approval. I hope that it will always be done. But the reason for pressing for inclusion of this was this. We do feel that at least some of the national priorities to which this country is committed and to which Parliament is committed and which are also found in the words of our Constitution are not being properly reflected in the pattern of giving credit, providing credit, by these institutions. Shri C. Subramaniam always reminds us, he is very careful to remind us—he chides us, I should say—that we want to do away with the private sector altogether. I do not know where he got that from. We have never said that. He says that the private sector has to remain for sometime and has to play a part along with the public sector, and if it has to remain and play a part, then we must also try to help it. I have no quarrel with that at all. We have never said that, with a magic wand, you do away with the whole private sector.

In any case, this Government could not do it even if it wants. It does not want to do, but even if it wants, it could not do it, composed as it is at present. In any case, we are not at that stage and never our Party has advocated that here and now, at today's level of economic development in this country, you can do away completely with the private sector. Nobody ever said it. But what we did say and what we continue to say and what, we think, is in conformity with the national priorities is, firstly, that this is an often repeated phrase or may be, a hackneyed phrase now—the commanding heights of the economy should be held by the public sector; in that direction, some progress has been definitely made over the years; I am very glad about it; and, secondly, that, as far as the private sector goes, we should take steps to see that

* Referring to Shri C. Subramaniam, the then Minister of Finance.

undesirable and undue concentration of wealth, excessive concentration of wealth, in a few hands and the growth of monopolistic trends and monopolistic forces is prevented. That does not mean that the private sector is to be abolished. It means that the private sector should function within certain limitations and certain constraints. And it is from that point of view that we have sought to show in our note of dissent also that the financing of industry, particularly by these credit institutions of the Government, has so far shown a definite and over-whelming bias in favour of what are called big business houses or monopoly houses, that provision of public funds in a very large measure has assisted these large business houses to increase their assets very greatly and that, in my opinion it is definitely not going towards reducing, but further consolidating, the concentration of wealth in a few hands.

In reply to a question earlier this year in this House a statement was given by the Government showing the value of assets of the 30 largest Houses in this country, how those assets have been developing from 1971 to 1972 and to 1973. The list of those 30 largest Houses shows that the assets of these undertakings have been going up steadily all the time. I cannot read out all the figures now. It is not necessary. But it is very clear that there is not a single case in which a definite increase has not been registered.

Then, we find that these five public financial institutions, other than the banks, have sanctioned loans over Rs. one crore each to 253 private companies. The total of such loans, that is loans of over one crore each, amounted on 31st December last to 837.42 crores. Out of these 253 companies, which are the beneficiaries, 80 received loans of over 3 crores of rupees each. And you will find, most of these beneficiaries are undertakings which are under the control, direct or indirect, of one or the other monopoly houses like Tatas, Birlas, Mafatlal, Thapars, Scindia, Singhania, Sarabhai, Bangurs, Kirloskars, Mahindra and Mahindra, Kamanis, Modis, Sriram, Walchand, Lalbhai Bajaj, Khataus, etc. These are the people who are getting the biggest chunk of the credit out of these financial institutions. This is the trend. I am talking in terms of trend. This trend is not in conformity with national priorities.

Of course, the witnesses who appeared before us, representing these financial institutions, did plead—and I sympathise with them—a certain amount of helplessness. They say : We do not after all select the companies or the undertakings to whom we have to give loans; we have to give loans to those companies which are given licences by the Government. The Government licences a particular company; that is done by a different mechanism, a different department, a different Ministry and then that company which has obtained the licence comes to us for assistance and we are bound to give them assistance. What can we do? If you want to curb the further growth, expansion and consolidation of these monopolistic trends, it is at the stage of licensing that the control should be applied; if you do not control it

there, later on we cannot do anything about it; they come to us for loan and we have to give them.

That is why, we have been making this point. This Bill within its limits really does not answer the basic questions and meet the basic problems. It is only, I would not call it minor, rather a secondary kind of provision in this Bill concerned with organizational restructuring of the financial institutions, whether it should be under the Reserve Bank or the Ministry of Finance, Department of Banking, whether its capital should be held by the Reserve Bank or whether it should be held by the Central Government, whether they should have a common Board of Directors or a separate Board of Directors. These are not fundamental things. In fact, I was wondering, why this Bill should have gone to a Select Committee. I did not follow that, because there is nothing except some organizational restructuring for purposes of convenience, as far as I am able to make out.

I have mentioned about the trend and the trend is like that. Also in the matter of giving equity support for the purchase of company shares, you will find that these financial institutions hold more than 25 per cent of the paid-up capital in each of the 129 companies representing a total investment of Rs. 76.83 crores as on 31st December. And what is the sort of these companies? Even in the case of a giant company like Tata Iron and Steel Company, 39 per cent of its equity shares have been purchased by the public financial institutions, but I do not know, to what extent, this holding of equity shares in these big concerns actually has made for a better or direct control. Although, there may be some Directors nominated by these institutions on these Boards, to what extent they exercise any effective supervision or control is a doubtful matter altogether. So, our contention is that this huge octopus of big business is being fed by public funds by Government's various institutions and agencies and that is contributing or fuelling the continued expansion, development and consolidation of these monopoly houses; and that we do not think is in conformity with the national priorities at all. Not that they should be given no assistance. Then, it must be under very different terms and conditions, but that matter is not dealt with in the Bill at all. So, really it is quite infructuous from that point of view.

The other point is that correspondingly we feel that some other sectors, other than the big business sector, have been neglected and so many complaints came to our Committee also, from the co-operative sector, the small-scale sector and so on. They are not getting their adequate share, their proportionate share, more than their proportionate share, I would say, because they are the weaker forces, they are the sort of an under-dog, as it were, who require more help and more assistance from these financial institutions so that they may grow. If you want the growth of private sector in India, we

should have all forms of giving encouragement to small scale and medium scale industries to come up rather than these big, huge monopolies being permitted to expand still further. Of course, there are all sorts of economic arguments about the economies of scale and I know. But what is the point in a country like ours which is still developing and where there are so many different categories and levels of entrepreneurship in this country that there the scale should be weighted overwhelmingly in favour of big business houses? The small man, the middle entrepreneur, the small entrepreneur must be encouraged. Otherwise, there cannot be a more accelerated rate of development and a better impact on the unemployment position and so on. It is something which is, I should say, a sort of a counterpart of Shri Subramaniam's own idea of having small farmers as the basis of our agricultural economy if it is to develop. That is the idea which he is very strongly favouring and supporting all the time, that you cannot have big farms, you must have small farms and it is on the basis of the proliferation of small peasant farmers that our agricultural economy can develop. Of course, I agree with him only so far, as I feel that is the first step and these small farmers in due course, will have to get into some sort of co-operatives of different types so that they can really develop much faster. However, in the field of industry here, the accent is the other way round. Here, the accent is on the big man, the big industrial house, the monopoly house and not on encouraging the small entrepreneur or the middle entrepreneur to get into the co-operative sector to develop. That way we feel the national priority should be better reflected in the credit policies, the overall credit policies which the Government is going to lay down in future at least for these public financial institutions to follow.

Finally, nothing can be done about this now, of course, it is too late. I have not tabled an amendment also. That is what I am afraid of. There is a default on my part. This definition which is given in section 3 of 'industrial concern' which will be eligible for assistance is quite an exhaustive list, but there is an anomaly in the position which I tried to point out the other day too. For example, the Government itself sets up important public sector corporations which are vital to the functioning and the development of a particular industry. For example, the Cotton Corporation of India. For example, the Jute Corporation of India. These are public sector corporations which have been brought into existence with the express purpose of seeing that the raw material market, the raw material availability and supply to the industry concerned, namely, the cotton textile industry in the one case and the jute textile industry in the other case, is put in a better organized shape and everybody concerned there gets a better deal, including the cultivator, and the industry is assured of a regular and stable supply at stable prices. Yet, we find that as far as the Jute Corporation is concerned, I know very well and it is a matter of public knowledge, that every year, they are complaining

bitterly that they are not being given enough financial support by the Government in order to carry out their purchasing operations. And that is a fact. The Jute Corporation has not been in existence very long but during the period it has been working it has not been able to make a really important dent in the market. That is to say, the result is that the bulk of the crop is still outside.

*** *** ***

I am suggesting to the Minister that he should give some thought to this matter either to set up some separate institution or do something or to bring in that kind of a corporation which is closely allied to the manufacturing industry and without whose proper functioning the manufacturing industry itself cannot operate in a healthy way. They should also have some source from which they should be able to get adequate support. For example, the jute industry does not function properly because this industry is in a perpetual crisis over its raw material. In some years there is a glut, in some years there is a shortage. The price is too low and the cultivators are ruined. It is going on from year to year. So, something should be done about it.

The name of the Bank is Industrial Development Bank of India. It is a comprehensive name. Certainly industries cannot develop unless they have a raw material base and also proper regulated supply. In future it should be looked into.

Therefore, we feel there is nothing very much controversial in this Bill at all. We do not think that perhaps it will make very much material difference to the existing situation unless and until the Government also has a second look at its overall credit policies in the light of national priorities and lays down some new guidelines or refreshes its ideas and comes forward with some newly defined, in the present circumstances, guidelines and policies which will provide for an all round development of the industries and not funnel the bulk of the public funds to the monopoly and big business centres.

THE MONOPOLIES AND RESTRICTIVE TRADE PRACTICES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1988*

I shall confine myself to this Bill and not go into a general review of the working of the MRTP Act over the last few years, though that is a very tempting subject. My friend Shri Somnath Chatterjee has discussed that at some length and I agree with most of what he said.

Government has enacted this piece of legislation as though it is meant to restrict the growth of monopolists. That is why it is called the MRTP Act—Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act. But the experience shows that actually it is just the opposite. In spite of this Act, there is tremendous growth in the power of the monopoly houses, in the concentration of wealth, and in the political clout that these big business houses enjoy in the life of the country. I would like to ask the Minister one question. On the face of it, this Bill might appear to be quite innocuous, namely that it will give a boost to indigenous technology. What is wrong with this? It is very good. But I would like to ask one question whether the Government has ever thought of acquiring any legislative powers to ensure that these MRTP companies do not go in for imported technology when that technology is already available within the country.

Have you ever thought of that? For example, just now there is a case pending, I am sure the Minister knows about it, where the Tatas, the Tata Iron and Steel Company proposed, or already carried it out, I don't know, to import a second-hand blast furnace costing about Rs. 150 crore, of which Rs. 28 crore is the foreign exchange component, although the Heavy Engineering Corporation which is a prestigious public sector undertaking in our country is already capable of manufacturing that type of blast furnace and has already supplied them to the Vizag plant and to the Bhilai plant. Why Tatas should be allowed to go in for this second-hand foreign plant where, I believe that even the date of the manufacture of that plant is not known? It is not a new thing, it is an old plant. But they are prepared to bring that spending foreign exchange and paying Rs. 150 crore for it rather than availing of the indigenously developed and manufactured blast furnace which is available with the Heavy Engineering Corporation. So, the question of self-

* Participating in the debate on the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (Amendment) Bill, 1988; *L.S. Deb.*, 22 November 1988.

reliance and import substitution and all these things have lost all relevance now. Moreover, I would like to know incidentally whether the Tata's proposal was ever made known, whether their requirements were ever made known to the Heavy Engineering Corporation. I can understand if the Heavy Engineering Corporation says that we can't supply you or something like that. We were told they were never consulted, even the Directorate of Public Enterprises was never consulted and it is the Steel Ministry or the Steel Department and the Director General of Technical Development (DGTD) which is under the hon. Minister's care who has pushed this proposal, approved it, recommended it and pushed it. So, what is the point in setting up all these costly plants in our country for manufacturing capital equipment if you are going to allow these MRTP Companies to ignore them and to import from outside even second hand stuff which I am sure is not very good at a huge cost of foreign exchange?

As far as the technology developed in India is concerned, this amendment of section 22A seeks to insert this clause which reads as follows: "...which is based totally on technology developed in India."

I wish he had said after "India, "totally developed in India in public sector laboratories and research institutes." That is not stated here. This technology developed in India may be developed not only by public sector laboratories or by our publically funded research institutes, there can be something which is sought to be shown as being developed in the in-house R&D laboratories of private companies. Admittedly, they don't spend very much on R&D in this country. But there are these associates and subsidiaries and branches of multi-national companies who are operating in our country and one example that comes to my mind is the Hindustan Lever. The original Unilever whose Headquarters are in England is known to be a very powerful multinational company, its branch operates in India, the Hindustan Lever, they claim to have an R&D laboratory in Bombay where they are supposed to be developing all sorts of technologies. But all those technologies—can they be called purely indigenous, Indian? Is there no foreign interest involved in that when there is a branch of the multinational company? So, I think it would have been better if clause 2(a) is read like this. This should be, "which is based totally on technology developed in India in public sector laboratories and research institutes". Then it would have some meaning. We know that many of these laboratories are also languishing for want of people to put their new designs and development to commercial use. Some years ago, I had the privilege of serving as a Member of the Committee which went into the working of the CSIR which was presided over by Mr. Justice Sarkar and we had gone into the working of all the CSIR laboratories in India. We found one of the main difficulties they were facing was—not that they had not done any work, they have developed many things indigenously—but the industrial

sector or the commercial sector was very-very tardy in taking these things and applying them to commercial and industrial use. A large body of young scientists, committed scientists are working in these laboratories who feel thoroughly frustrated and disappointed because their work is not being encouraged by commercial application.

*** *** ***

My point is that MRTP companies which are connected or which have collaboration agreement with foreign multi-national corporations operating in India can conceal imported technology as indigenously developed in their own in house R&D establishments. How do you ensure that actually indigenous technology which requires encouragement, which is being developed in your public sector laboratories and institutes are going to benefit from this Bill? There is nothing to guarantee or to ensuring it at all. Certainly the MRTP companies should not acquire any monopoly over the use of publically funded R&D technologies. Suppose some company wants to use this technology, they should not be in a position to monopolise it. As my friend, Shri Chatterjee* was saying, there are non-monopoly companies, so many of them in this country, a majority of them, even medium scale industry, even small scale industries can benefit from the use of these technologies which are indigenously developed. But there is no legislation or any move being taken by the Government to give those industries any incentives to use this indigenous technology. It is only the monopolies who have been brought out to be offered incentives.

*** *** ***

The point is, whether you want to give any positive incentive to the non-monopoly companies. Apparently, you do not.

Another question is, it is a very difficult, practical question. There may be a company which is producing a number of products and the company is one but it has many products. It has a diversified range of products. In one particular product, it may use either imported technology or indigenous technology.

It may not require it for some of its other products. You had not made clear here whether that company comes under the benefit of this Amendment or not. It may not use that technology for all its products. It may use it for one product out of 15 products. Then, does it mean that that particular company will benefit from this, that this restriction will not apply to it any more under this Act? It is not made clear.

*Referring to Shri Somnath Chatterjee, MP

How to ensure that a particular technology is one hundred per cent Indian, indigenously developed and within Indian control—I mean the technology is developed within Indian control? Patented technologies are being imported from abroad through the process of technical collaboration with many MRTP companies and the Government has no means of verifying or monitoring or ensuring that these are not passed off as totally indigenous. For this purpose, I would suggest that there must be an adequate monitoring or verification machinery and that should be under the Directorate of Scientific and Industrial Research. Some sort of a Board or something should be set up under the Directorate of Scientific and Industrial Research. My suggestion is that Board should also include in it some eminent, independent scientists who are not necessarily Government scientists but who are known to be eminent people in a particular discipline or particular field.

It seems that Government's main concern is to provide more and more incentives for the growth of the monopolies. That is the part of a liberalisation policy which has been initiated by our Prime Minister. Cabinet Secretary Shri Deshmukh*, in a statement made only a few days ago, has said that "our commitment to open up the economy is unequivocal"—those words I am quoting—he was speaking, of course, where a number of American businessmen were also present—"and the process of liberalisation will be taken to its logical end." That is what the Cabinet Secretary has said. I must take his words with due weight. This means that there is at present an outlook of unrestricted and unchecked so called liberalisation. That is, all restrictions are to be removed. All these big companies, monopoly houses, are both foreign Multi-National Companies and MRTP companies. As Shri Somnath Chatterjee has pointed out, clearances are being given by the Government without referring to the Commission. This has been stated by the Commission itself in its report. You can say, as somebody said here, that the Commission has got the power *suo moto*, if it wants, to go into any case. But that is not the same thing. The point is it does not show any concern on the part of the Government to get a particular application at least gone into, verified and cleared by the Commission which has been set up for this purpose under the Act.

*** *** ***

Anyway, the Directive Principles of our Constitution are being violated right and left. Concentration of economic power and wealth is being allowed to go unchecked under this MRTP Act. Then the Directive Principle should be removed. The MRTP Act itself has become meaningless. A few days ago, there was a report—I do not know whether it is correct or not—that one of the panels of the Planning Commission has recommended in the 8th Five Year

* Referring to Shri B.G. Deshmukh, the then Cabinet Secretary.

Plan that this MRTP Act should be scrapped. It is going in that direction. It is no longer any use keeping it as a restrictive, controlling or regulatory measure. Actually, Federation of India Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Associated Chambers of Commerce, as you know very well, their spokesmen, their Chairmen and their presidents, are campaigning openly in the Press every day through their statements and speeches directed against this MRTP saying that it should be further liberalised, its scope should be further restricted. They are saying that they do not want the Commission. They want an absolutely unchecked and untrammelled path on which they can go ahead. A few days ago, at some seminar organised by FICCI, I think the hon. Minister himself was there. The subject which they were discussing was "Liberalisation the next step." I do not know what exactly the Minister said there. I do not go by the Press reports except that he is reported to have told them that the Power Sector is going to be opened up to the private houses. In the name of liberalisation, it may mean so. But he did say one thing which is reported in the Press that the philosophy of liberalisation will mean a steep rise in our import bill. It will mean that we have to import more capital equipment from abroad; more raw-materials which go into the products which are meant eventually for export—whether they are exported or not; components and technology at prices which are rising all the time. The world prices are not within our control. So, if liberalisation is going to mean more and more import of these things, the cost is going to go up further while the rupee is depreciating all the time against the foreign currency. You know very well to what extent the rupee has depreciated against the foreign currencies. So, this means that in order to help these monopoly houses through the liberalisation policy, the Government is even prepared to allow this trade deficit that we are suffering from, to become more acute because exports are not going to grow to the extent imports are growing. Everyday, the Ministers are complaining and wailing that exports are not picking up as they should, inspite of so many incentives being given to these people, whereas liberalisation of imports means that the gap between imports and exports value will increase, trade deficit will grow. But, anyway, this is the philosophy which the Government is pursuing.

Sir, this latest amendment, I am afraid, can only be regarded as a link, one more link in a chain—there is a dangerous chain, I should say—of mortgaging the economy, at least the industrial economy to these houses. Only a few days ago, in reply to a question here, the hon. Minister himself was complaining—it is a question regarding prices of tyres—and he himself said here that there are five or six tyre manufacturers who have formed a kind of group or cartel and they are dictating everything; they are dictating the prices and they are raising the prices.

*** *** ***

They are dictating everything. When people ask questions here the Minister says that the Government have no control over them and they cannot do anything and, they have decided to import from outside. This is the only way they thought that they can cope with these people. So, if the monopolies grow the way they are growing, the way they are encouraged to grow, and you think that the remedy is to encourage more and more imports; then you will be caught in the other dilemma which is that the trade deficit will increase much more and many industries which are indigenous in our country are going to be harmed; they are already being harmed. Even the capital equipment industries are reeling. I mean, the managements are complaining that all these plants were set up to make machine building and manufacturing capital equipment so that we can be self-reliant and stand on our own feet but now by liberalising the whole policy, you are allowing any Tom, Dick and Harry to import all these machines and capital equipment from, abroad. What is going to happen to the Public Sector plants?

*** *** ***

Sir, we cannot consider this amending Bill to be an innocuous and harmless thing. It is one more link in the whole chain of strengthening the monopoly and their grip on the economy. Therefore, I totally oppose this Bill.

THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND BANK (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1982*

We have heard some very interesting discussions on the international economic policy and the international economic scene. I am very tempted also to join this fray, but, I think, it is not possible within the scope and compass of this debate. Perhaps, the Opposition has been a bit lax not being very vigilant at the time of introduction. Personally, I do not recall that 20th of July introduction. Perhaps, some of us were not here. I do not remember. But we have been lax. I have no hesitation in saying that we should have been more alert and we should have taken these points at that time. There is no doubt about it. But this does not certainly preclude us having our say now.

Just now, we heard the hon. member** on that side, claiming that the International Monetary Fund's policies, conditionalities and purpose are meant to restore the structural imbalances, which exist in the economies of developing countries, like ours. I do not know whether this theory is accepted even by the IMF authorities themselves, because, if it is the job of the IMF to correct structural imbalances in the economies of the developing countries, then the IMF must be some kind of an angle of charity. That is all I can say because the whole fight that is going on is about the new economic order, this basic struggle between the developing countries and the developed countries, between the North and the South and so on, in which context, I think, India is very much on the side of the developing countries. That is precisely because there are structural imbalances, which are in built into the economies of the developing countries for no fault of their own, but due to certain historical reasons, just because these imbalances are not only not being sought to be overcome but are being sought to be perpetuated and aggravated further by the more affluent of the developing countries. So, I do not know why this claim has been made. This is patently ridiculous.

Only recently, the President of Mexico, Louis Portilo,—who was our honoured guest two years ago, on the Republic Day—when he has carried out the nationalisation of banks in Mexico, has done a bit of plain speaking

*Participating in the debate on International Monetary Fund and Bank (Amendment) Bill, 1982; *L.S. Deb.*, 11 October 1982.

**Referring to Shri Y.S. Mahajan, MP

about as to how the international finance is operating through all these various agencies against the interest of the developing countries. I do not want to quote him. But he has said some very patent things, how, by manipulating the international interest rates, by compelling these countries to borrow more and more to sink deeper and deeper into the morass of debts, which they can never hope to repay, the third world countries whether in Asia,, Africa or Latin America, are being plunged into a deeper and deeper crisis. This is a deliberate policy, he has said, which is being carried out by the more affluent powers of the Western world and the developed countries. Anyway, I do not wish to go into it. We can discuss it on a future occasion, if we get an opportunity which I doubt very much.

*** *** ***

First of all, I want to ask one or two clarifications from the hon. Minister.** The annexure which is attached to every Bill gives extracts from clauses and sections of the original Act, which are sought to be amended, for reference of the members, so that they can easily refer to them. I should have thought that in this Bill the provisions of sub-sections (1), (2) and (3) of section 54 of the Indian Income-tax Act, 1922 would have been reproduced, the text would have been reproduced here, for our reference, as they are now being sought to be deleted from the reference in section 3. First of all, the Indian Income-tax Act of 1922 is no longer in force; it has been amended umpteen times, and the Income-tax Act, as it stands today, of 1961, incorporates so many amendments made earlier. Now you are asking us to understand the implications of the provisions of sub-sections (1), (2) and (3) of section 54 of the Indian Income-tax Act of 1922. I do not know why you should compel us to do so much of home work and research; we are not bound to do it. We are not school boys here, sitting for an examination or a test. It is the common practice to give the extracts of clause or provisions in the Annexure.

*** *** ***

In the Statement of Objects and Reasons, the Minister has stated:

> "The present opportunity is being availed of to omit the reference in section 4 of the Act to the Indian Income-tax Act of 1922..."

But what is the reason for this deletion is not being stated anywhere. The whole purpose of this amending Bill has been shrouded in a certain amount of obscurity, and it is this which has provoked a debate or controversy which is taking place, inside the House and outside also in the Press and everywhere. What is the necessity for you now to come forward with an amendment,

**Referring to Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the then Union Minister of Finance.

deleting the reference to the provisions of the Indian Income-tax Act, which should apply in relation to information obtained under this section, as they apply to the particulars referred to in that section? It was not answered so long. He himself has stated in his opening remarks that these modifications and amendments, which were made by the Board of Governors of the IMF on April 30, 1976, came into force on the 1st of April 1978; that means, about four years ago, they came into force.

This is October 1982. So, for over four years after those amendments or modifications in the articles were brought by the IMF itself, there has been no necessity to bring this amending Bill, you were able to carry on without this amendment.

So, anybody logically would come to the conclusion that either this amendment is not of a very pressing nature at all—it is not urgent at all you can carry on very well for four years, it means that you are supplying all the information that the IMF wants from you without any difficulty, even with that clause being there. Now, why is it necessary to delete that portion? What is it now that makes it necessary to delete that reference to the Income-tax Act, without which you want to imply that you cannot supply to the IMF the type of information they want? Why was it not necessary all these years? You cannot have both ways; you cannot have the cake and eat it too. Either there is no urgency of this amendment, you must say that. If there was no urgency how did you carry on all these years?

*** *** ***

On the other hand, has anything intervened in between 1978 and 1982—some new development which has now made it necessary for you to want to delete this clause? The only new thing of any importance that one can see is the fact that you have entered into this loan agreement last year, that you have taken a massive loan of Rs. 5000 crore and it is only after that, shortly after that, you have come forward with this amending Bill. Until you took that loan, prior to your taking that loan, you never considered it necessary to bring this amending Bill although the IMF has already brought in those amendments and modifications four years ago. Now, if you say that this must be done so that you come in conformity with those amendments, I can understand it. But why was it not necessary for four years and why has it suddenly become necessary now. The only development is that you have taken a huge loan, the largest loan that the IMF has given to any borrowing country so far. So, that means that he must explain to this House as to what are the new conditionalities attaching to last year's loan which now make it necessary to remove this reference to the Income-tax Act in order to supply the IMF the type of information and data which they may ask us to do. That

is why all the suspicion has arisen. There was some protection under the Income-tax Act provisions. They can go so far and no further. They can give certain information and data but not beyond a certain point which would trangress on certain details relating to the condition of the particular Corporation or Company or individual or party who is to supply that information. Once you have ordered to supply the information, there is no go, they have to supply it. That is the meaning of the statute. And it is also stated in the IMF Act, the parent Act, that the extent of the details which have to be supplied is to be borne in mind by the Government and the Reserve Bank of India and that decision is final, nobody can question it. Nobody can go to a court and say that 'I have been asked to reveal details to an extent which it is not necessary for the IMF to obtain'. You cannot say that. Their decision will be final. But how much of the details you have to supply? My humble question is: Why was it not necessary all these years and now why has it suddenly become necessary and what is the type of information which they anticipate that the IMF will ask for? In order to supply it whatever safeguards there were in the Income-tax Act for our people in this country are to be removed. No light has been shed on this at all. Nobody says anything. The Government has given no explanation either in the Statement of Objects and Reasons or in the opening remarks of the hon. Minister. Then, what are we supposed to approve or disapprove? I cannot understand. The general question which we have stated earlier many times is that there is no doubt that once you have contracted this loan, then the economic sovereignty of this country is being eroded. You are not the master in your own house as far as your economy goes. That is inevitable, IMF never forced us to take this loan. IMF never took us by the scruff of the neck and said, "you have got to take this loan". They cannot do that. They have no power to do that. It is we, our Government, voluntarily, with open eyes, under-standing, conscious of all the risks, decided to go in for this loan knowing that these conditionalities are attached to it. Having done that, it is their duty and obligation to tell this House, why are they amending this Bill and removing this provision now when it was not necessary to do so for the last four years? Obviously it was not so urgent. What has made this urgent now? It means after we have contracted this loan, there is some pressure from the side of the IMF for getting more and more information, data of a nature which is prohibited from disclosure under the Indian Income-tax Act. You must tell us what is that. Neither the Parliament, nor any court in this country, nor even the Supreme Court of India has access to these things.

You remember the old voluntary disclosure scheme? Some people disclosed their incomes and assets under the voluntary disclosure scheme. Incentive was offered to them. If you voluntarily disclose your income or assets you will be spared of certain burden. Is anybody entitled to know? The Finance Ministry is not liable to disclose. The Income Tax Authorities in this

country are not liable to disclose who are those people and how much they disclosed voluntarily. That is kept confidential.

Last year Shri Venkataraman* floated Bearer Bonds, to try to unearth black money and so many people are reported to have gone to the banks and deposited some part of their black money at least. No question was asked—who are you, where did you get this money from, how do you account for it? Guarantee was given to them that no question will be asked. Nothing is to be revealed. It is all confidential. Parliament cannot know. The Supreme Court cannot know. Nobody can know.

Now, this IMF, international external agency, can demand any information, any data, any particulars, any details, it wants to, regarding anybody and the Government has got to supply that information. Previously the only somewhat modest safeguards against going too far were those provisions of the Income-tax Act. Now that is being removed. Why? I want to know. He must reply to it. I really do not want to take much time because this is the main controversy in this Bill. There are some other things of course.

Article 9 of the original, your parent Act, section 5 says:

"The archives of the Fund shall be inviolable".

That means that all the material, the information, the data, everything that the IMF collects and keeps in its archives are to be inviolable. That means 100 per cent secrecy and confidence is to be expected in relation to the information which is in the custody of the IMF. They are not bound to reveal anything. They are the super kind of guardian, they are super policemen. Everybody else must supply whatever information they ask for. As far as their archives are concerned, they shall be inviolable. What is this double standard which we have agreed to accept? Are we not a sovereign country? I do not know why members on the other side are inclined to this. After all we are Indians; we are the citizens of this country. We are members of Parliament. We are all concerned with the sovereignty and security of our country and sovereign rights of our Government as far as they relate to foreign agencies. I do not understand why they react so. They get provoked by our criticism so much. Somebody must be satisfied about these things. IMF is put up on such a high pedestal, as a kind of super agency. Super-State, I should say. And then, they are not liable to divulge anything to anybody and every State which takes loan from them, as Member of the IMF, is obliged to give any information that they ask for. And in our particular case, there is the Indian Income-tax Act which put some limitations on the details and to the extent to which we are bound to give information. Now, the Minister has

* Referring to Shri R. Venkataraman, the then Union Finance Minister.

come with an amending Bill and says that this must be removed and he has no obligation to explain to this House. Why he has not stated a word about it, so far? Why is it necessary? For what purpose? What are they demanding from us? We would like to know.

So, Sir, we are totally opposed to this kind of Bill. The last point which I would like to make is this. Large parts of our country, in many States, are facing a very severe food crisis arising out of the drought and flood which affected so many States. We are going to debate it later on in this week. The only point I am raising in this connection is and I think, it was mentioned this morning during the Question Hour by the Minister also, that in order to save the poorest section of the people from this near-famine conditions which are likely to develop in some areas which have been affected badly by drought and flood, the Government has got to purchase and procure more and more foodgrains in order to supply to those suffering people in those areas through the public distribution system at controlled prices. Without that you would not be able to save these people in Bihar, in U.P., in Orissa, in the northern districts of West Bengal and in so many States from the terrible conditions. Rice is now selling at Rs. 4 per kilo gram. How are our people going to survive? Statutory ration has been cut down in Calcutta from 4 kilo grams to 2 kilo grams. The issue price has been increased already by 13 paise so far per kilo gram. So, what I want to say is, in this grim condition of crisis which we are facing now, the necessity of the Government to purchase foodgrains and supply them through public distribution system will necessarily entail a subsidy. Without subsidy, these things cannot be carried out. It is obvious that the Government will have to buy foodgrains at a rate much higher than the rate at which they have to supply to the people, through the public distribution system.

*** *** ***

I want to know from the Minister whether this is permissible under the IMF conditionalities or not? I am asking this at a time when millions of people in our country—poorest section—are going to face conditions of near-famine and starvation. Already, you see, there are conditions leading to people having demonstrated for relief and food in many places. They are facing it already.

*** *** ***

I do not know* I want to know from the Minister. I have not signed the Agreement. Not only for public distribution but for increasing the subsidy also.

* Referring to Mr. Deputy Speaker's query--"Are we to take the permission of the IMF even for the public distribution system?"

I am sure, you are aware of the fact, that the IMF conditionalities are very much up on the question that the Government subsidy must be cut down all-round. Last year, when we are debating this loan, I asked whether this policy would apply to food also. I asked whether it is a general policy of making those countries which have taken the loan to cut down their subsidy or it will also apply to the subsidy which is necessary for getting the public distribution system of food going. No reply was given.

But today the situation has become very acute and serious. And this new amending Bill has been brought in. I do not know what it means. No explanation has been given. I want to know whether the subsidies which are necessary in order to provide food at cheap rates in these flood and drought affected areas, are going to be affected in any way by the IMF conditionalities that subsidy should be sharply reduced. And pressure from the IMF means, the issue price will be increased.

All it means is that instead of now having increased it by 13 paise per kg., tomorrow they will increase it several times, by much more, to a figure which will be beyond the capacity of the poor people to buy. That is all it means. Is that the policy that they are going to follow or are they in a position to tell the IMF that when our people are facing conditions of starvation and all that, if it necessitates paying higher subsidy in order to feed them, we are going to do it, whether conditionality or no conditionality. What is the position in regard to that, we want to know. We have all these apprehensions. We have been told that we have nothing to bother about. They say that the Government is sovereign and they will do what they like. But that is not the way we are proceeding. If you cannot satisfactorily explain even this one Clause, what else can you do? Therefore, our apprehensions on bigger issues are very much justified and I oppose this Bill because it has been brought in a hole and corner way.

Now, big lectures are being given about international balance of trade and stability of exchange rate. Where is the stability of exchange rate? He talked about stability of exchange rate. My hon. Professor talked about flexibility of exchange rate. Is it the same thing? They say that the IMF loan is going to lead to stability of exchange rates. Is it leading to that? The Professor said, "No, no; it is meant to provide greater flexibility to exchange rate" which means something else. You can see what is happening to the rupee in terms of the dollar every day. We cannot venture to have a bigger economic discussion now. I hope, some time will be found in future. It is not an innocuous and innocent Bill as it looks to be at all. We are waiting to see when the hon. Minister's reply comes. But I am totally opposed to it.

SOCIAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

THE CONSTITUTION (TWENTY-FIFTH AMENDMENT) BILL, 1971*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, while speaking during the discussion on the 24th Amendment in the last Session, I had pointed out—and I want to repeat that now—that there is some common ground between the Government and certain of our friends on this side, but both of them from opposite ends and for opposite reasons, no doubt are trying to show that these amendments are something which are really revolutionary in nature. I had made it clear, and I make clear now also as regards the 25th Amendment, that there is nothing revolutionary about these amendments. The 24th Amendment, as the Minister himself reminded us in his opening remarks, merely restored the position as it existed prior to the Golaknath case. In all the years before this case, nobody kicked up a big hullabaloo in this country saying that there was anything dangerous and revolutionary in the Constitution. But the Golaknath case upset that existing position. The 24th Amendment restored the *status quo ante.* In the 25th Amendment again, even as recently as 1959, we know that in the Shantilal Mangaldas Case, the Court had taken a particular view on this question of compensation. I may just quote part of the judgment of the Supreme Court in the Shantilal Mangaldas Case because it is very relevant now with reference to the 25th Amendment:

> "Whatever may have been the meaning of the expression 'compensation' under the unamended article 31(2), when Parliament has expressly enacted under the amended clause"—

they are referring here to the Fourth Amendment—

> "that no such law shall be called in question in any court on the ground that the compensation provided by that law is not adequate, it was intended clearly"—

this is what the Court is saying—

> "to exclude from the jurisdiction of the Court and inquiry that what is fixed or determined by the application of the principle specified as compensation does not award to the owner a just equivalent of what he is deprived".

* Participating in the discussion on the Constitution (Twenty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 1971 regarding amendment to article 31; *L.S. Deb.*, 30 November 1971.

This was the Supreme Court's own view in the Shantilal Mangaldas case only in 1969. And despite this, in the Bank Nationalisation case, another bench of the same Supreme Court took a contrary view and therefore, now the Government is faced with the necessity of coming forward with a fresh amendment.

Shri Salve* has cast some doubt.... He cast some doubt on whether the substitution of the word 'compensation' by the word 'amount'—even that—is foolproof or not, legally speaking. I am not competent to say; it is for the Government and their legal advisers to make sure about that. But you can never be sure of anything, now, that goes before the Supreme Court. My point is that this is above all a political issue. Let me make it quite clear. I agree with my friend Shri Mukherjee** that this Constitution requires many more fundamental changes, really revolutionary changes, not pseudo-revolutionary changes; but whether these changes can be brought about within the four corners of this Chamber, I do not know. They may have to be brought about through some action somewhere else; some action somewhere else is alone responsible also for the 24th and 25th amendments coming here. That also is quite true.

I just want to remind the Government that it is not a legal question. It is primarily a political question, and the question is whether, at the stage at which our country has reached, which is to be given primacy—property rights or public welfare? It is a simple question with which we are faced now. It has nothing to do with socialism as Shri Salve correctly pointed out. Some of the Directive Principles could have held good in the Victorian era also, but yet, in our country, in this modern era, these Directive Principles, however, vague, however nebulous, have never yet been translated into legal action. Who prevented you all these years from framing laws in consonance with the Directive Principles? Who was blocking your way? If you had done it earlier, the people would have welcomed it all the more. Obviously, there are changes which have taken place in the country which have acted as the compulsion on the Government. That is a good thing. I say it is no longer a question of a Bill. It is something that the ruling party put in its election manifesto. It has become the possession of the people of this House. The election manifesto of the ruling party in the last elections, and on the basis of that manifesto, all the assurances which the Prime Minister herself gave to millions of people in the country when she went round addressing them—those things have become the possession of the people of this country, and it is on the basis of that manifesto and those assurances that the people also came forward and gave you, what you are so, fond of reminding us always—the massive mandate.

---

*Referring to Shri N.K.P. Salve, MP.

**Referring to Shri Samar Mukherjee, MP.

If I may quote from your manifesto at that time, it was stated:

> "The spirit of democracy demands that the Constitution should enable fulfilment of the needs and urges of the people. Our Constitution has earlier been amended in the interests of economic development; it will be our endeavour to seek such further constitutional remedies and amendments as are necessary to overcome the impediments in the path of social justice."

It is on that basis that assurances were given:

...Now, since the 22nd July, when the original Bill was introduced in this House, it is the possession of the people of the country. If you want to go back on it, you have to understand the implications for your party, for the Government and for the country and the people.

All this talk, all this campaign has gone on since the 22nd July, the main protagonists of which are my friends over here who have been conjuring up the spectre of total expropriation of property, who have been shedding crocodile tears for the small property owner, small shop keeper, small peasant and small artisan and they have been saying when they were going round that once that Bill was passed there will be no security and everything would be expropriated. All this is, of course, not true but only moon shine. This is just an enabling power.

As has been said on a previous occasion, theoretically speaking, many Parliaments in this world can pass laws which can be taken to the point of absurdity but if they do so those Parliaments and those Governments cannot survive a minute after that. Last time during the course of the debate Shri Kumaramangalam* quoted from a judgment given by a Judge in England in which he said that the British Parliament had no written Constitution and there was nothing to prevent the British Parliament from passing a perfectly valid law saying that all blue-eyed babies that were born in England should be drowned at birth. But having passed that, they could not survive. Similarly somebody else said somewhere that the British Parliament can enact a perfectly valid law for boiling the cook of the Bishop of Rochester to death, but it has not done so.

So this is an absurdity. We are not dealing with property which is not in fact an impediment to socio-economic reforms. We are dealing with property whose concentration is in the hands of a few people and which concentration, I agree with my friend Mukherjee, has been allowed to develop over the last twenty-five years of the Congress regime. This is economic concentration

---

* Referring to Shri S. Mohan Kumaramangalam, the then Minister of Steel and Heavy Engineering.

resulting in large holdings, industrial monopolies and big princes and landlords. It is that which is now coming in the way and we are concerned only with, that we are not concerned with any other property.

One can always argue that any law is liable to abuse or misuse. But that can never be an argument against bringing an enabling law. Our party is pledged to support this Bill in its original form as it was introduced. We have campaigned for it throughout the country, just as the reactionary and vested interests have also campaigned throughout the country against it spreading imaginary fears among the small property owners.

I have to say this. Technically speaking it is true that the amendments standing in the name of Shri H.R. Gokhale* have not been moved but the Government is not willing to tell us just now whether it intends to move them or not. However, they have been circulated and are in the possession of the House. I cannot give my observation on this Bill without taking them into account. Because they have been circulated, let me say just the opposite of what I have said: if this Bill is sought to be put through with the amendments which have now been tabled and circulated, our party is totally opposed to that and will oppose this Bill....

*** *** ***

The total effect of these amendments will be, in our opinion, completely to undermine the very structure and purpose of the original Bill. I would like to know what happened between 22nd July and now, which has suddenly brought about this *volte face.* Something has happened which is political, not legal compulsion....

*** *** ***

...What are the second thoughts which moved you between July and now to bring forward these amendments? Perhaps it is due to the fact that towards the end of July this Government received a draft Ordinance from the Kerala Government providing for the take over of all foreign-owned plantations in that State. Is it that? Is it that which has hurriedly inspired the idea of a two-thirds majority in the State Legislature because that Ordinance has not yet gone back to the State, has not yet been approved or assented to. The Kerala Ministry, which recently your own party has also joined, has unanimously approved of an Ordinance and sent it to you for your approval, providing for the take-over of all foreign owned plantations. Now without giving assent to that Ordinance, if you can first push through this third amendment of Shri H.R. Gokhale, then the Kerala Assembly, of course, is tied

* Referring to Shri H.R. Gokhale, the then Minister of Law, Justice and Company Affairs.

hand and foot. It cannot bring about a two-third majority there in favour of any such Bill. You are placing a veto in the hands of the foreign plantation owners by this amendment. Is that the motive? There may be some Bills or Ordinances contemplated by some other States also, I do not know. In the case of Bihar the Bill for the abolition of the Tata zamindaris in Jamshedpur is pending before the Central Government. The Bihar Government has passed it, but the assent or approval has not been given. So, you cannot expect us to regard with equanimity these amendments as some things which are innocent. We have to look behind them and see what is behind them, and we see the pressure of the reactionary vested interests—those who are outside the ruling party itself which do not want the Tata Zamindari or the foreign plantations to be taken over. It is the pressure of such people which has brought forward these amendments.

We read in the newspapers—of course that is their domestic business, but I cannot help commenting on it—that their parliamentary Party or their Parliamentary Executive was not even consulted before these amendments were drafted and circulated. So, why should we not be suspicious that some pressures operating behind the scenes have brought about this reactionary sliding back?

I do not have much time. So, I will make one or two comments on these amendments. I would like to mention first of all the second and third amendments because to our mind these are the most dangerous and mischievious.

*** *** ***

I do not know the argument or logic in support of the word "adequately" in the second amendment because they have not come to the stage of explaining it. But, to my mind, however much you try to explain it away, it does give the Judges a loophole by which they can intervene to decide whether concentration of wealth should be reduced or not, and if so to what extent. This is precisely what Shri Gokhale in his opening remarks said he did not want either. The Supreme Court Judges should not be allowed to exercise political judgment or so-called socio-economic judgment. They are not there for that purpose. Suppose some State Government comes forward with a ceiling on urban property and fixes it at a ridiculously high level and they say that it will be Rs. 10 lakh. I would like to go to Court and challenge it on the ground that it does not give adequate expression to the Directive Principles. It talks of an urban ceiling, but fixes it at an absurdly high figure. If the amendment is accepted, my road is blocked; I cannot go before the Court and plead against the ridiculously high ceiling. There are other examples, which can be given from the other angle. So, on the face of it, it is adding to the confusion. In fact, it will only allow the Judiciary an entry

again into this field to give a political judgment. Therefore, we cannot support it.

Coming to the question of the special two-thirds majority. I do not want to say anything against it. It is so palpably monstrous. You want to elevate every single Bill which a State Legislature or Parliament may make in future for acquiring property to the status of a constitutional amendment. You cannot permit this thing to happen. It means, as I said, putting a veto in the hands of the reactionary defenders of the *status quo.* If amendment No. 3 is insisted upon by Government, there is no question of not opposing it; we will oppose it to the last, but I think it would have been far better if they had not come forward with this Bill rather than bring it forward and then bring in this amendment.

Apart from the constitutional validity, I would like to ask, do you think it is in line with constitutional propriety, without consulting the State Governments or State Legislatures, to bring forward an amendment here saying that every State Legislature, in future, if it wants to pass such a Bill, can do it only by two-thirds majority? It may be constitutionally valid for you to do so, but is it proper in a federal set-up? Is this the meaning of constitutional propriety? How do you think the States will take it?

Finally, I come to amendment No. 1, educational institutions of minority communities should be protected as far as possible in conformity with the commitments and pledges given under articles 26 and 30. There can be no two opinions about it. But our quarrel with the amendment is not on that ground. Our quarrel is on the ground that it says, "any property belonging to an educational institution..." The property may have nothing to do with the educational purposes of that institution at all. There are all sorts of educational institutions in this country. Some of them do not have huge properties. They just have their institutions, some buildings, etc. But there are other institutions in various parts of the country which own huge amounts of landed property and other things, which have nothing to do with their educational purposes. This is opening a loophole whereby big holders of property, by a simple subterfuge, can just transfer the properties in the name of some educational or charitable trust and get away with it. Then, there is also the confusion as to what is minority and who is majority. I think Mr. Birla in Calcutta can claim to be a member of a minority community. Certainly, he belongs to a linguistic minority when he operates in West Bengal. You know his wealth, property and possessions there. Even his property which is outside West Bengal can be transferred to some so-called charitable trust or institution within Bengal and you have to pay the market value. If you want to keep something which is in conformity with articles 26 and 30,

we have no objection. It should be thought about and redrafted. But this sweeping provision about "any property" is something which is meant not really to protect the interests of minorities but to protect the interests of certain vested interests who may happen to belong to minorities.

In conclusion, I would just end with one or two quotations. This is from a newspaper which everyone knows here, the *Tribune;* ..... I find there an editorial written on the 17th November where they say:

> The judicial view hitherto has been that the Directive Principles should be enforced without amending the Fundamental Rights, which is like making omelettes without breaking eggs.....No doubt, the vesting of these new powers in Parliament and the State Legislatures is capable of abuse. But the fact that a power is capable of abuse has never been a reason, in law or in fact, for denying its existence or challenging its use for a proper purpose.

Therefore, finally, let me just once again make a presentation of a small quotation, both to Shri Piloo Mody and also to the Ministers on the other side; I am sorry, Shri Chavan* is not here because he has told me in the past on the floor of this House that this gentleman whom I am quoting is out-moded and out of date. May I first just quote and then reveal his identity?

> We Communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man's own labour, which property is alleged to be the ground work of all personal freedom, activity and independence. Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property! Do you mean the property of the petty artisan and of the small peasant."

I may add here 'of the small shopkeeper'—

> "a form of property that preceded the bourgeois form? There is no need to abolish that; the development of industry has to a great extent already destroyed it, and is still destroying it daily...
>
> You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society, private property is already done away with for nine-tenths of the population; its existence for the few is solely due to its non-existence in the hands of those nine-tenths. You reproach us, therefore, with intending to do away with a form of property, the necessary condition for whose existence is, the non-existence of any property for the immense majority of society."

---

* Referring to Shri Y.B. Chavan, the then Union Minister of External Affairs.

Whom am I quoting? 125 years ago, in 1848 that old man Karl Marx, now sleeping peacefully in High Gate Hill, London, said this. I think these words are as true today as they were then. Today I make a present of it here.

ON RESERVATION OF JOBS FOR DEPRESSED CLASSES*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I believe that there is an exercise underway to enable this House to adopt a unanimous resolution and I hope that the effort succeeds. I see quite a number of drafters at work, and I hope the effort succeeds. In that case, I think very many speeches are now no longer required. It is not the first occasion when the Fundamental Law of our land as enshrined in our Constitution is being challenged by the thousand-year old Law of Manu. This is not the first time when it has happened in our country. Sir, the roots of this problem have been spoken about here by so many members. The roots are not to be found in this question only on reservation of jobs; the roots lie in social and economic oppression. And I am acutely conscious of the fact that this social and economic suppression, oppression, exploitation which exist in our society are not going to be overcome in a day and it is not going to be solved even by a resolution of this august House. But the compulsion of the moment is that fire is burning, a conflagration is going on in the Western part and North Eastern part of our country and it is our bounden duty to do everything possible to see that that conflagration is put out.

Something happened in the Eastern and North Eastern part of our country, which has still not subsided, which has been going on and on for over one and a half years. I do not go into the merits of that question, but there is no doubting the fact that it is something which has threatened the concept of national unity and national integrity that we all cherish. And now at the other opposite end of the country, on the Western side, we find something similar happening, taking up a different kind of issue. Sometime when passions cool down, may be, you should do some assessment, some study of the fact of how it is, that for example in Assam this issue, which later became such a big issue of agitations, the so-called foreigners' issue, was never raised till 1980. Elections were held in 1977, Assembly elections and Lok Sabha elections were held in 1978 on the basis of the same voters' list. Nobody ever raised this question of foreigners, and raised it to the level of a State-wide disturbance. But suddenly from 1980 it began.

---

* Participating in the discussion on a Motion regarding situation arising out of agitation, etc. regarding reservation of jobs for SC and ST; *L.S. Deb.*, 18 March 1981.

This question of reservation in postgraduate medical colleges is also, as you have heard here, something which was introduced by the Government in 1975. Then how is it that nobody picked it up and made it into such an issue of conflict and clash till 1980? So, I suspect very strongly—and I have no means of proving it; but I suspect very strongly—that it is not simply just a matter to be studied on the surface. There are some forces at work in our country—we have said it here many times before—who are out for destabilization, for wrecking the unity and integrity of this country. And there may be internal forces; there may be external forces also at work.

I must say one thing which, I hope, will not be taken amiss. At this particular moment when the fire has been lit in Gujarat, and the fire is burning and attempts are made to spread the fire even into adjacent States like Rajasthan and so on, with all due respect to the Prime Minister, I don't think that this was the correct moment for her to come out with the statement about merit, and the fact that we are always for merit also; we don't want to denigrate, merit. Who wants to denigrate merit? Nobody. But this statement in which she has said, "this reservation was meant to be a sort of a crutch to help weak people to walk; but we should not get used to crutches for all times of come, etc."—well; it is all right, of course, in theory. I am sure the people who are concerned themselves don't want the crutches for all times to come; they want to come up to a status of equality with other people and throw away those crutches. But let us be practical. Is there any such prospect, realistic prospect in the near future? Can you see it before you? It will take a good long time. So, I would have preferred it if the hon. Prime Minister had said this some other time. Yes; some other time she could have expressed these thoughts. Why I am saying this is this: at this particular moment her coming out with this statement may be misused and distorted by people there who are interested in keeping this trouble going. If they are only temporary crutches, well, why not try to see that these crutches are done away with? But this House at least—whatever anybody may say outside—cannot, under any circumstances make any sort of a compromise with any question of diluting or weakening or giving up of the policy of reservation which has been adopted in the Constitution and by this House. As was mentioned here, some years ago, *i.e.*, 18 or 19 years ago when the aggression had taken place, we adopted a resolution, with everybody standing. We passed a resolution standing here, and took a pledge in 1962; and it is my humble request—you may ignore it—that at the end of today's discussions we do the same and adopt a resolution which, I fervently hope we will be able to do. Here too, an aggression is being committed, a war has been declared against the Harijans, scheduled tribes and the poorer sections. Then let us, today also, give some encouragement and strength to those people by passing that resolution, with everybody standing up in this House. I would suggest that, humbly.

Now, the figures have already been given. I do not wish to repeat them about the actual state of affairs, in Gujarat as regards these reservation of seats; and how ridiculous the position is. Anybody can say that they have been threatened, swamped by Harijans or Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people. Only 25 per cent of seats, 110 seats out of 347 in the Post Graduate courses were kept reserved; and out of them, as somebody said here, only 37 seats have been filled and the rest has been added to the general quota. Out of 737 posts of Professors, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Tutors in five medical colleges, only 22 are held by SC people and 2 are held by ST people. This is the reality; and on the face of it, I am afraid, I cannot approve of the attitude of the State Government; on the face of these facts, I cannot approve of the action of the State Government in trying to appease these agitators by giving them farther concessions, in doing away with all that, what is transferability and carry forward and all that which were all there. It has not helped to quieten the agitation. In fact, some people feel that by their agitation we have been forced to give certain concessions; if they intensify this agitation, they will get some more. So, this policy of appeasement is no good and I certainly condemn it.

Shri Vajpayee* had mentioned this fact. I am also going to mention it and then you can see how the chauvinistic feeling of some upper class is; how far it has gone. They object to these reserved seats, but they do not object to what are called donation seats, which are given by donors by paying money; they do not object to that? They only object to the seats which are kept reserved for SC&ST people. That is exactly what I say.

The state of administration there, of course, should be explained to us in more detail by the hon. Home Minister. What is going to happen now? Can we rely on this administration and the condition in which it is to handle this situation? Shri Moolchand Daga** had made very serious charges there about various bureaucrats, officials, police officers and others who may be actually colluding, because this is not our first experience of riots and disturbances. Weaker sections, Harijans and Muslims know to their cost that in all cases when such circumstances develop, how at least a part, I do not say the entire administration, but certainly a part of the administration and certainly the police force do not play a role which they are supposed to play in the secular States. The same thing is found by our people who have been there. Shri Bhupesh Gupta*** also went there personally. He had heard endless complaints about how some incidents took place which were situated a long distance away from the Harijan *bastees* but the police had gone to those

* Referring to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, MP.
** Referring to Shri Moolchand Daga, MP.
*** Referring to Shri Bhupesh Gupta, MP.

bastees and beaten up people there and arrested them. I, as a trade unionist, am also deeply distressed by the fact that the workers have been so seriously divided that the Ahmedabad textile mills came to a stop because all the workers of the Spinning Department who happen to be Harijans refused to go to work, because there was no protection. They said, "Until we get protection and normalcy is restored, we cannot go to work in the mills." Almost the entire labour force of the Spinning Department in the various textile mills stayed at home and could not go to work and as a result of that, the mills were closed.

Normally, of course, when production in the mills gets interrupted by such factors, then the mill-owners are very anxious to see that somehow or other normalcy is restored, because they suffer some loss because of that. But this time I find that nothing is there of that sort. Nobody is bothered about it. Some suspicion is definitely aroused.

I was very agreeably pleased, I should say, to hear the speech made today by my friend Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and I wish that the sentiments which he expressed here and the appeals that he made here were also faithfully followed by the followers of his party down below. I am not saying that for scoring a point. We have got our own reports. Our people are there. Our people have visited those areas. I do not doubt Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's honesty or veracity at all in this matter and I am very glad that he has spoken, the way he spoke. But you see that in all parties there are people who do not follow what their leaders say. All I am saying is, here a fire is burning; a fire is burning. Therefore, I would be very happy if what he has said here is really followed by his followers down below. Because that is not our report at all.

This problem of some posts and some seats and all that is not going to solve this problem. That is all I wish to say. It is a much deeper problem, social and economic problem in our whole society and there is a type of informal reservation of seats also which is not sanctioned by law or by Constitution but there also we find that the same mentality operates. Can I give you two examples of Scheduled Tribes and Adivasis, particularly of the Santal Paraganas and Chottanagpur of Bihar? You see, there is an agreement there that if the lands of these people are acquired in order to construct a project, a public sector project or something, then, at least apart from compensation that is given for the land which is statutorily given, at least one member of each family which is dispossessed will be given a job in that project. That is a type of—you can call—reservation. It is a sort of promise of reservation without any law behind it to justify it.

Recently, a couple of weeks back, an incident took place at Balrampur, in Hazaribagh District, firing took place and people were killed. It is only due

to the fact that the Central Coalfields which is a public sector undertaking and which is a party to this agreement, decided not to implement it. Naturally, people got excited and agitated and there was some trouble and firing took place and people were killed. And in the Eastern Coalfields near Lalmati they are carrying out this agreement faithfully. Somebody here decided that they would not follow it up.

What is happening in Jamshedpur? There are 10,000 contract labourers. The point is, they are Adivasis and tribals. They are Scheduled Tribe people and their welfare has to be looked after by our Government. There was an agreement signed in Jamshedpur by all the managements, of Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company (TELCO), Tin Plates, Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO); everybody is a party. I have a copy of the agreement with me, signed by them, that in those jobs which are permanent jobs, of a perennial nature, the contract labour will be absorbed as regular workers in those jobs. TECLO has formally carried it out, Tin Plate has carried it out, the Tube Company has carried it out. But Shri Rusy Modi, Managing Director of TISCO, has refused to carry it out. They are Adivasi workers. It is some type of employment opportunity opening for them. They are getting agitated. Police did a lathi charge. Our veteran Kedar Das died as a result of it. Is it a joke or what? Whom does this Rusy Modi want to win over? Is he trying to win the Government over, or Mrs. Gandhi over, by issuing a statement? "Out. It is all a conspiracy of the Communists." The Adivasis, poor down-trodden contract workers, are wanting to get the jobs which they were promised and Rusy Modi, because he is the boss of Tatas, the Government is afraid of laying a finger on him and he is allowed to get away with this kind of contemptuous attitude towards these Adivasis and Scheduled Castes people. A debate or a resolution here may not solve the problem, but all we can do, is let us pass a resolution. That is good, as far as it goes.

I do not want to take more time, but I will end by making two suggestions. One, I have said already. If you adopt a resolution, please consider at least whether we should pass that resolution in all due solemnity by standing up, as we did at the time of the Chinese aggression. I also consider this to be an aggression on a huge section of our people who happen to be downtrodden.

Secondly, I endorse the suggestion made by a member over there that instead of each of us belonging to different parties visiting Gujarat separately and coming back and issuing a Press statement or holding a Press conference—you cannot prevent anybody doing that, but why not for a change—I would have liked it to have happened in Assam also last year, if we could have done that—let the top leaders at the national level of all those parties who have got a firm commitment to secularism and to those principles which are enshrined in our Constitution, who are for national unity and integrity, let all those

leaders from that side and this side—I am prepared for it; our party is prepared for it—let us go together in one common mission or group to the affected spot. Let us go together and appear before the people together and appeal to them. What will they do to us? Will they attack us? Let them attack us. Will they throw stones at us or beat somebody? We should say, we are prepared for it. But if we go there together and tour those affected places together like that—please don't say 'security', this and that; Mahatma Gandhi had the courage to do this kind of thing all by himself when there used to be trouble anywhere—if we go together, I am sure it will have a big, decisive impact on the people. It will be possible to isolate the real people who are trying to create trouble and it will make sense to the general mass of the people who are good people—some of them may be misled—but peace can be restored; normalcy can be restored. I would commend from my party that course of action for all of us to follow.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my party I rise to extend our whole-hearted support to the decision of the Government and the Prime Minister to introduce 27 per cent reservation to the backward classes.

*** *** ***

Sir, I can understand, the Congress Party is in a difficulty over this issue. There is no single leader of the Congress Party who can say that they oppose the Mandal Commission as such. But then, they have missed the bus. They were given a chance, they were given a golden opportunity. They were in power for so many years. During the last 10 years in which the Mandal Commission submitted its report, it was they who were in power and if they were really true to their promises they could have taken the initiative. It would not have been necessary for this present Government to come and initiate this measure. They could have done it very well but they failed because they were really not serious, they were not sincere in this thing at all. When they say that we support the Mandal Commission, it is because they cannot oppose it. They seek to qualify it with so many conditions and so many restrictions that actually there is nothing left at the end of it if we accept what they are saying.

The point is, Sir, the atmosphere in the country is now highly emotionally surcharged and I understand it is very difficult for anybody to take a very detached and objective view of the implications of this decision which has been taken by the Government. Because people are on the streets. It is not surprising to know that the social structure, particularly the Hindu community social structure, as it existed all these years has been given a shake-up by this decision. It is only natural that those people or those groups or those elements who think that they are going to lose the privilege which they have enjoyed uninterruptedly for so many years, should be upset. They should be angry; they should be alarmed and they should be apprehensive of the future. It always happens when a big shake-up of the whole social structure takes place, as it is going to happen now or as it is happening. I am deeply and my party is deeply sorrowful at the loss of lives of people and, of course, the loss

* Participating in the discussion under Rule 193—Decision on Mandal Commission Report and Measures for Promotion of Employment for Youth in addition to reservations, etc.; *L.S. Deb.*, 6 September 1990.

of public property also which has taken place since this announcement was made. I know that the Government here in Delhi had itself given orders that despite all provocations, despite all difficulties, the police should not fire. In spite of that, firing has taken place in some place and some precious young lives have been lost. At the same time I wonder whether all these young people, who are after all our own sons and daughters, who are now rampaging on the streets, if all of them have really understood or anybody has bothered to explain to them in a calm, dispassionate and detailed way, what exactly are the dimensions of this reservation measure which has been announced. Or is it being blown out of proportions? Is it creating in the minds of young people a spectre, which is not justified at all? They have implemented, if I can understand it, in a truncated form, the recommendations of the Mandal Commission. The only thing that they have introduced is and that itself has set off this big commotion throughout the country that these backward classes who constitute 52 per cent of the population should be given 27 per cent reservation. Wherein the Central Government services and the Central Public Sector Undertakings, nowhere else, not in the State Government services. I think, the State Governments employ a very large number of people in their Departments and Undertakings and all that. This decision of the Government does not apply to them. It does not apply to any educational institution. It does not apply to any medical college or engineering college. It does not apply to such Classes or Castes which are not common to the State List, which are not there already in various States and are common with the Mandal Commission. It does not apply to them. Also, a categorical assurance had been given that it is not going to be imposed on any State which does not want it. I really wonder whether all the people who are so excited about this, who are carrying on such big anti-reservation campaign—whether it is by word of mouth or by writing or by leading demonstrations in the streets—have really, truthfully and faithfully explained to the concerned people, what are the actual dimensions of the decision which the Government had taken. I doubt it very much. Because to me, it appears that it is quite a modest, restricted, truncated implementation of the recommendations of the Mandal Commission. But it is thoroughly justified and it is welcome. It is not the whole thing which should have come, which could come and which could have come in the name of the Mandal Commission. Some people are behaving as though, their children and their grandchildren, for generations to come, are going to be totally deprived and that there is no further left for them and so on. An exaggerated, distorted picture has been given, I am sure. Otherwise this kind of excitement and agitation would not have taken place which has taken place now.

I would only plead that this conflict or whatever we would like to call it—difference of opinion, conflict, clashes in some cases—are taking place and that should not be allowed to degenerate into a sort of pro-reservation

and anti-reservation issue. This will be extremely harmful to our society. It is an extremely sensitive issue, we understand that, in a society like ours with all these centuries of history and traditions behind us. Shri Vasant Sathe had spoken eloquently about *Manusmriti* and the fact is that for 3000 years of rigid caste system in which people are sealed off from each other, in which they are hermetically sealed into water tight compartments by the accident of their birth, this is the society in which we have been living. However much we may decry this caste system and however much we may go on hoping and pleading that we will get rid of this caste system some time, and we all realise that this is not in keeping with the development of modern society. But the fact of the matter or the reality is that, everyday of our lives, even those amongst us, who are well-educated people, we are living, breathing, eating and sleeping with consciousness of caste in our heads. We have passed so many laws in this Parliament, beginning from the Constitution, down to recent days. If you go by those laws, then beginning from untouchability, the caste system has no place in the country—not at all, according to those laws. But how many people in this country really, effectively, loyally and sincerely are prepared to carry out all the implications of those laws in their own daily lives? When we give our daughters in marriage, do we go by them? There may be a few exceptions here and there; all honour to them, to those who are prepared to practise inter-caste marriages and inter-communal marriages and all that. How many are there? The overwhelming majority of our people, including those who are well educated, continue to practise will nilly, consciously or unconsciously, all the prejudices of caste or caste system which are there ingrained in our society. How many of them are willing to go to the hut of a Harijan and sit and eat with him? How many will give their daughters in marriage to people belonging to other castes?

Somebody, spoke here the other day; I think it was our Minister Shri Janeshwar Mishra I do not know, when I was I listening to him, I was surprised. I said: when Harijan girl marries a Thakur, she becomes a Thakurani, and when Harijan boy marries an upper caste girl he is accepted as a jamaai. I know what happens to them also, if they try to do that kind of a thing. There have been so many cases in our country. They are not allowed even to go and live in the same area—if they marry like that it is at the peril of their own lives.

So, what I am saying is that this limited reservation is not a cure, is not a panacea for the caste system, nor is it going to cure the problems of unemployment. It is not meant for that. But what I say is this: I am a Communist. Personally I may say, perhaps with touch of shame—I suppose one should be ashamed of the fact that one has never known poverty in one's life. I have not known poverty. Let me make it quite clear here, nor have I known social oppression, nor can I complain that I was not able to get access

to good education. Everything that was desirable, I was able to get because of my family, my parents' position and all that. But today, one cannot but understand this fact that if these down-trodden people, backward people, weaker sections, socially backward and educationally backward, economically backward people remain like this, as a drag on our whole society, a drag on our whole future development and progress, this country can never go forward.

Therefore, those people—may be they are 15% or 17%, how many I do not know—who are really, consciously because of their own interests, are opposed to this reservation, we cannot allow them to exercise a veto on this thing at all. Therefore, what I want to say is that we cannot abolish the caste system. Certainly not overnight, and certainly not for a good many years; I do not know, for a few centuries, perhaps. The caste system will not disappear. That way, the law of Manu is supreme in the mind of man. You can abolish it on paper, but the most difficult thing to change in the world is the consciousness, and the mind of man. So, the caste system will continue for a long time. I think all of us who are sitting in this House may no longer be in this world, and even then the caste system will go on persisting.

But the point is that taking this as the reality in which we live, we are realists in the sense that we have to accept the world, the society as it is, not as we would like it to be. We would like it to be very different. But realism tells us that we have to begin from here. When you want to bring about changes in a direction which eventually will be in conformity with your ultimate goal, you must begin from here.

You must begin from here. But you must begin by taking certain concrete steps. And, therefore, I think that this confusion between castes and classes and professions and occupations and all that are all mixed up, jumped together here. If you take these lists which are tabulated by the Mandal Commission, you will find classes there. But we cannot speak of castes openly because it is unconstitutional. There are occupations there, there are professions there, but I am not learned enough to question whether all those lists which are tabulated by the Mandal Commission, are all without any error and are absolutely perfect and do not require any modification or any amendment.

I am not in position to say that. All those matters can be gone into in due course. Some people have complained, that, for example, in Andhra Pradesh there are certain forward people who can never be considered backward, as they are forward people, they have been put in the backward classes list. Okay, if that is a fact, the matter should be gone into and corrections can be made.

Somebody said the other day, I think it was the Chief Minister of Orissa, that some people who are known to be forward people, they have been put

in the backward list. If that is a fact, these things can be rectified and this should be rectified. But, what I am saying is, that you cannot hedge this thing along at this stage with all kinds of restrictions and qualifications and conditions. This idea that there should be, a means test, is very late. Some people have now suddenly become very much considerate for the fate of the less educated and less affluent people within each of these backward classes. They are saying, "Oh! They will never get these benefits. All the benefits will be cornered by a few people at the top." But that is the way our society functions. What about the upper classes and the upper class people? Are not their privileges and benefits and rights also cornered by small groups of people? In this great industrial empire of our big businessmen and big monopoly houses belonging to the upper classes, are they not always complaining that small groups of people, small groups of business houses are cornering all the licences and all the subsidies and all the export licences and everything? They are doing it and here also I am sure about it. I do not deny the fact that some groups are there, who are better organised than the other groups, better organised, who may try to corner a larger disproportionate share of the benefits. I know what happens among the Harijans. You know it also, Sir. In your State, in Maharashtra also, we know it. After all, we had reservations for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes not now, but from the time of our Independence. Within Scheduled Castes there are groups who are better organised than others. And who, if you go into the details, you will find, that they are cornering a disproportionate share of the benefits and the jobs and all that. But, from within the entire Scheduled Castes community I do not hear any outcry against this. I do not hear any outcry. The psyche of these people, who are backward, who are deprived, who are kept down, who are not educated, who are poor, their psyche has also been distorted and destroyed and they have been given a kind of a permanent inferiority complex. It is our job to see that they get out of this inferiority complex.

So, I would say that it is very wrong. I do not want to make this a point over which to have a very heated argument with anybody.

But I say this and my party feels, that at this stage, at the initial stage, that for the first time this reservation is being introduced, on a limited scale, up to 27 per cent at this stage, it would not be correct, it would not be desirable to insist on the introduction of some economic criterion or a means test.

Yes, we can go into this later, after this thing has worked for some time and these classes are able to make some progress and come up, then the whole matter can be gone into again. All those other side issues which are there, whether it should apply only to recruitment or also to promotions, are

different. We all know that this promotions question is the main cause of a lot of heart burning, particularly in the government services. At some stage I think we will have to go into the whole question as to whether there should be only a one time benefit given to a particular person or his family. Once he has become a Collector or Magistrate or a Government official, then after that his children need not get the benefit. These are all considerations which have to be gone into at some stage. But I say and my Party says that now at the initial stage when these people for the first time are being given an opportunity to feel that they will also have a share in the administration of the country, it will not be dominated and monopolised by a few people belonging to some upper classes. At this stage, it is absolutely wrong, it would not have positive results, it would be undesirable to try to insist on some kind of means test or an income ceiling. Let us consider it after some time. We have suggested in our Party Resolution that let this scheme work for ten years and after ten years, let all these things be gone into again and they can be modified.

Today, unfortunately, though I wanted to mention it in the House, I did not get an opportunity. There was a massive demonstration here which ended in a rally at the Boat Club of some forty to fifty thousand youth and students, all drenched in the rain, since last night they are living in the open at the Boat Club, where there is no shelter and no covering. They have come from several States of the country and their main slogans were "jobs for all", "Education for all". Incidentally, they also voiced their support for this reservation decision which has been taken by the Government. But they made it clear that reservation by itself is not going to cure anything. Therefore, it is very necessary and I urge the Government, I believe, that they will take up follow up measures and follow up steps. The main thing is that new opportunities must be created in the country, particularly in the rural areas. Those unemployed boys in the rural areas are not going to come and get jobs in Government offices, sitting at table under the fan in a Government office or in the Railways. They have to be given opportunities for earning and for doing some work, useful, productive, gainful employment there in the rural areas, where they live. For that, a massive programme is required. A programme of developing all types of new employment opportunities, self-employment and so many other things have to be done. Land reforms in those parts of the country, where they have not been carried out, where they have been avoided and shelved, there land reforms have to be carried out. And of course, educational opportunities are dismal in our country. We have to all get together and work out—it is not a party issue—how educational opportunity should be provided on an increased scale to all these people, who are deprived all these times. Then only this reservation will also have some concrete meaning. I would say that we must keep in mind, as I said in the beginning, the proportion of this whole thing.

Sir, the Mandal Commission has made some very telling remarks in its recommendations. It says:

> "It is not at all our contention that by offering a few thousand jobs to OBC candidates, we shall be able to make 52 per cent of the Indian population as forward. (They cannot do it). But we must recognise that an essential part of the battle against social backwardness is to be fought in the minds of the backward people themselves. In India, the Government service has always been looked upon as a symbol of prestige and power. By increasing the representation of OBCs in Government services, we give them an immediate feeling of participation in the governance of this country. When a backward class candidate becomes a Collector or a Superintendent of Police, that is material to the members of his family only. But the psychological spin-off of this phenomenon is tremendous, the entire community of the backward class candidate feels socially elevated. Even when no tangible benefits may flow to the community at large, the feeling that now it has "its own man in the corridors of power" acts as a morale booster.
>
> In a democratic set-up, every individual and community has a legitimate right and aspiration to participate in ruling the country. Any situation, which results in a near-denial of this right to nearly 52 per cent of the country's population needs to be urgently rectified."

So the first limited step has been taken to rectify this situation. And all this talk which is going on how merit will suffer, how the efficiency of the administrative services will be destroyed if these people are allowed to come over there and so on and so forth—an argument which we heard before Independence also from the foreign masters—is bogus. When people are given education and opportunities they can progress and develop as well as anybody else. It does not matter to which class or which caste they belong. I do not think that our administration which is dominated by upper class people is a great model of honesty, integrity, efficiency and all that. I do not think, it has acquired that reputation. There are, of course, very good officers, very efficient officers among them. The bureaucratic system as a whole which runs the administration of this country has not got a very high reputation for integrity and efficiency. Why not? It is not dominated by lower class people. It is dominated by upper class people. So it should not have been so. I do not believe that merit is a monopoly of certain upper caste people only. It is wrong to think that merit must be drawn only from the narrow upper caste segment of people. That way, ultimately, merit will suffer. It is necessary to bring more people into the mainstream of the administration and development of the country. Therefore, I heartily welcome the step that has been taken. All those qualifying things, some of them I also share. We have said openly that

perhaps the modalities of implementing this thing, how to do it, when to do it and so on, could have been perhaps better considered and a broader measure of agreement could have been reached if there has been some broader consultation and discussion and if this announcement had not been done so hastily. There is no haste in taking the step. The step is long overdue. But the haste with which it was announced, perhaps was not altogether wise.

Finally I would only say one thing that whatever the leaders of different parties may say, I think, in every party without exception there are number of people who because of party discipline or because of their leaders or whatever it is, may not be speaking out, but I believe, there are people in all parties who heartily welcome this. I think that unless the leaders realise this and unless they attune themselves and attune their stand and their position with the feelings of the people in their party, then they will come to grief sooner or later.

Somebody has already said that 52 per cent of this population which we are talking about at present, is supposed to enjoy only 4.5 per cent of the top grade jobs. Is this not gross injustice? And it will not be changed overnight. You know what has happened in the case of Scheduled Castes. Tens of thousands of unfilled reserved vacancies for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are being carried forward. After some time, they lapse. They cannot be filled up. That is the shame on us. It shows that there are gross inadequacies in our whole system.

I would say finally that these apprehensions regarding drop in the quality and efficiency of the Government services owing to influx of OBCs are totally unfounded. I am sorry to see the young boys and girls from colleges who are carrying out funeral cremations and funeral ceremonies of merit. Something called merit is being burnt or buried and young girls are going about with posters saying we do not want our husbands to be unemployed. But, there are lakhs and crores of unemployed husbands in this country who are unemployed for no fault of their own. I am sorry for these young ladies who do not bother about those people. They are only concerned that their own husbands in future should not be unemployed. What kind of outlook is this in the society, I do not understand, specially those who are enjoying the fruits of good education, higher education. They should have some social consciousness also. I would say that let us all try, we may have differences. There may be many points on which further clarifications are required and so on. But, let us all still get together, try and see that the surcharged atmosphere is calmed down. It cannot be solved on the streets. It will be solved through discussions, dialogues, exchange of opinions and all that. And everybody who is seriously concerned with the welfare and fate of this country should appeal to the agitationists, whoever they are, to give up this

agitation and let they and their representatives, their leaders and whoever they are, let them come and as strongly as they want, let them put their point of view, but it should be across the table and not out in the street. I urge the Government to take more urgent measures to see that some dialogue is opened with the leaders of the student community or other youth, who are agitating and who are very excited. Thus, while I deplore the instances of police repression against them, I also deplore very much the action of some forces and elements in the country who are trying deliberately to instigate and incite these people by creating all sorts of unfounded and false apprehensions in their minds and not allowing them to understand calmly what is the actual dimension of the Government decision. This is a very wrong thing to do for political and party purposes. This is fratricidal way of trying to solve this problem. We will only hurt each other and ultimately hurt the country. Therefore, I would appeal to everybody, it may be a futile appeal I may be making, but let us with all sense of responsibility try to exert all our efforts to see that this type of agitation is reduced and people are in a calmer mood and willing to sit down and argue, argue their points. Nobody is asking them to give up their argument. But, let them argue it now and that is the only way in which we can make some progress in this matter. I hope, though I do not know, I have indications that may be the intensity and the height of the agitation has probably reached its peak now. It has reached its peak and it may begin to decline after that. No agitation goes on forever.

Therefore, I shall finally end by saying that it is not a revolution by any means. I do not call it as revolution by any means. But, it does represent the big shaking up of the social structure in favour of the weaker sections and to that extent, of course, the upper class people may feel frightened or they may not like it. But unfortunately, this was a long overdue shaking up of the social structure and it has to be carried out. My party fully supports this and I congratulate the Government for having taken this step.

ON MANDAL COMMISSION REPORT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE*

Shri Shankaranand's** motion, Sir, is concerned with the events of the last few weeks. Now, here once again I find him digressing into the merits and de-merits of the Mandal Commission reservation recommendation which we have already debated more than once in this House and I do not propose to get digressed into that subject again. If you want to have another full-fledged discussion on the Mandal Commission, let us have it by ourselves. But that is not the purpose, I took it, or Mr. Shankaranand's motion which I totally oppose because in that motion he has referred to certain incidents, certain disturbances and certain what he called break down of law and order and break down of administration and all that, though he spoke very little about that. His motion does not say what was responsible for that and now in his speech he says that caste has been set against caste by the Government's announcement and that is responsible for all this trouble that has taken place. As though before this declaration of the Government we were living in a caste-free society. No caste prejudices were there; no caste discrimination was there; no oppression of one caste or injustice to one caste by other was there and it all started with this historical decision of the Government. This we are expected to swallow living in the society, in this country where for the last three thousand years we have known nothing but the caste system.

I don't want to repeat as to what had happened which has led to this unfortunate state of affairs. But, it is really agonising to find these young boys and girls going to the limit of taking their own lives, for what I don't know. I am quite sure that the over-whelming majority of these young boys and girls do not know what is actually contained either in the Mandal Commission recommendation or in the Government's decision or for that matter in certain articles of the Constitution. If we could sit and talk to them in a peaceful atmosphere we would know how much they have actually been able to understand; what are the implications of this decision and declaration. Nobody has tried to educate them. My main criticism against the Government is that during this period—after they took the decision, the decision which my party whole-heartedly welcomed—they should have used all the means

*Participating in the debate on the Adjournment Motion on police atrocities in dealing with student agitation against Governments decision on Mandal Commission Report; *L.S. Deb.*, 4 October 1990.

**Referring to Shri B. Shankaranand, MP.

at their disposal, the Media, the Press, the Radio, the T.V. . Every day they should have tried to explain in detail to the people of the country what exactly is meant by this decision; how much is in it and how much is not in it; what is really there and what is being imagined. It was not done, and that has helped, I think, in a way, to play into the hands of those people who wanted to mislead, instigate and incite these young people. These young people started agitating thinking that something has happened which was actually not there.

Shri Shankaranand says that actually the Prime Minister has given nothing to the backward classes. Then, if nothing has been given to them, why all this hullabaloo and why all this pandemonium by the upper class people? If nothing has been given then why all this commotion has taken place? Crores and crores of public property has been destroyed. Whole rakes of railway trains have been destroyed. Whole rakes—not one or two carriages—have been burnt. I don't think that these young boys and girls have done it. Somebody else has done it.

So, Sir, I also feel that principally only one item of the Mandal Commission recommendation has been accepted and announced by the Government, and that has led to so much loss of life; so much loss of property. It has created so much frenzy. He says that because of this decision, the backward classes have lost the sympathy of the people. Was there much sympathy before that? Who had sympathy for them? The upper class people who were enjoying all the unspoken, unwritten, undeclared reservation in their own favour all these years had any sympathy for them, that I want to know. What sympathy did they have? But one thing only has been accepted and that is that in the Central Government jobs, Central Government services, including the Central Public Sector, there this 27 per cent reservation for the backward classes has been ensured. It is not as though, the whole world has suddenly collapsed, as though all the boys and girls are only to get jobs in the Central Government services. Is it possible in our country? Is it feasible? How many Central Government jobs are vacant every year? I want to know this. Let some data be collected. Let some responsible agency collect the proper data, figures and everything and educate people on that basis. People are behaving as though everybody would have got a Central Government job but for this thing that this wicked Government has done. How many people get jobs in the Central Services now-a-days where recruitment is also stopped for the last four or five years? In Class I and Class II jobs, how many people get jobs every year or can get jobs? But the whole dimension of the thing has been blown out of proportion. The State Government administrative services are not covered. They have got their own formula for reservation and it has been going on for years together. Even from the British days in some cases it is going on. In the case of Kerala and all these places, this reservation policy is going on for long

before even Independence. So, they are not affected. The educational institutions have been left out. All the boys who are thinking of engineering colleges and medical colleges, probably still think that now they won't be able to get admissions to these colleges because of the policy declared by the Government. But it is not a fact. They have been excluded. The Armed Forces have been excluded. All science, technology, nuclear energy, atomic energy institutions have all been excluded. Promotions have been excluded. In that sense, if Shri Shankaranand wants to say that the Mandal Commission's recommendations should have been accepted and implemented in toto then only he will feel that the backward classes have got justice.

*** *** ***

There is a time hounoured convention in this House that names—Sir, I want to you hear this—that people who are not present in the House should not be named or should not be accused. Therefore, I am not mentioning names. I could mention names. There are lists of names with us, of people who were seen actively on the streets instigating these boys and girls. ..... I mean people who were distributing money, who were distributing food, who were sending lunch packets, preparing lunch packets—shall I name those people—I do not want to break that convention—people who have printed posters, who have printed stickers for putting on the windshields of the motor car saying: 'Don't blame me; I did not vote for V.P. Singh'. Were all these things being printed by these poor students, boys and girls? We know who did all this. I can mention those names, but I will not mention them..... All I am saying is that all this rumpus that took place, as we said, was unfortunate. Buses can be replaced, and trains can also be replaced, though at a very big cost to the economy. But those lives cannot be replaced, lives of these young boys and girls, youngsters who have committed suicide in one form or the other. I am reminded only of that time in Tamil Nadu, some years ago when there was a big agitation against Hindi and a number of people burnt themselves, immolated themselves. In some other countries, we learn of Buddhist monks pouring petrol on themselves and burning themselves for some protest that they wanted to raise. It is for the first time in our country that we have seen this phenomenon, and I understand very well that any boy who cold-bloodedly can pour petrol on himself and set on fire, must be suffering from some tremendous emotional provocation. Otherwise he cannot do it, he cannot do a thing like that. It means that actually, they have not understood, or they have deliberately been misled, what is actually meant by the decision the Government has taken, which Shri Shankaranand has summed up very beautifully, by saying that he has given nothing; nothing has been given to the backward classes. Then why all this pandemonium? Why did you not go and explain that actually, nothing has been given?

... So, actually the thing is not that. After so many years, these backward classes people—although it is a small step forward—feel that at last some justice is going to be done to them, and they are going to have some share, however small, in the Administration.

And that is why the other side is so angry because they do not want this to happen. Let me tell my friends that the people of backward classes have begun to ask: are we not Indians? Do we not belong to this country? Are we not part of the Indian people that some concessions are made for us after so many years and immediately this violence is created by burning of buses, burning of trains, looting of shops, shooting and all kinds of things. Why? Are we not part of this country? Are we not entitled also to get some concessions? Are we not entitled to feel that our own people will have a share in the administration? Is it such a big crime we have committed that everybody should come down on us like this? Please be patient; please be reasonable.

Even on the 3rd of September when the first all-party meeting was called and held upstairs here in this building, on that day, everybody said, and the Prime Minister said and all the leaders of all the parties advised, that a dialogue should be started with the students. But whom to talk to? Who is the leader? It is a leaderless movement; a movement which has no identifiable leader, a disorganised movement. Who should be called? Who should be talked to? And then they took a stand through a statement issued in the Press that they were not going to talk at all until this Mandal Commission's decision was withdrawn. It means that the Prime Minister must resign; it means that the Prime Minister should go; it means that the policy decision which he has taken must also go. I know that was the game. So, we can never accept that position. But that does not mean that he must resign and this policy must be withdrawn. Unnecessarily, futilely, so much damage has been done. And the climax of the whole thing is, as others have said, that it was going to be a bit longer. Suppose the Supreme Court stay order had not come. They say that it has saved the Prime Minister. Suppose it had not come. We saw on the 2nd October what was going to happen to this movement. It would have been continued for a few days more. Suppose no stay order had come. The agitation would have gone on.

But now it cannot go on in the old way. You saw what had happened on the 2nd October. A movement like this which has no clear idea what they were fighting for, who do not understand what has actually been done, who have no leadership, would have gone into the hands of these people. I do not know who were they. There may be anybody. I do not know who came to Delhi, looted the shops of small shopkeepers who were selling eatables, broke so many windowpanes, panes of houses and vehicles and all that and set fire

even to the water tanker which was sent to the Boat Club to provide them with water; they also extorted money from people. If this movement had gone on for a few days more, I do not know where it would have taken us. It is utter vandalism and criminal behaviour and nothing else. I want that the students should demarcate themselves from this kind of hooliganism. We do not want the students and the youths to fall into the hands of these types of people. Therefore, we appeal to them—we are extremely sorry for what has happened; really we are anguished by these acts of self-immolation—we appeal to the young boys and girls to give up this path. This is not going to solve any problem. Ultimately, if you want to solve this problem, how reservations are to be done and all that, you have to sit down across the table and talk to each other in a civilized way. You cannot go on like this. Therefore, I do hope that the whole atmosphere will now calm down and everybody will cooperate in contributing to that, exerting all their efforts to see that passions are cooled down. The real situation should be explained patiently to everybody. We sit down and talk. There is a plenty of scope for talking, of course, about the modalities. What is that we are complaining: that we have not been consulted: about what? About the policy? About the principle? Not that at all. We said, I still feel, that we should have been consulted about the detailed modalities and the procedure with regard to its implementation. But, anyway, the Prime Minister has his own reasons. He said, there is no need for consultation because this is the same thing which has been announced several times. I would have preferred if he had made this announcement after the 30th of October, 1990. You cannot take so many things on to your plate and try to digest all of them simultaneously. There is something going on there. Every day news of new communal outbreaks is coming. It has happened in Ghazipur, it happened in Gonda, it happened in Udaipur, it happened in Pali, it happened in Baroda, in Gujarat and it was going to take place in Mahem in Bombay. Somehow it was prevented. Now, every day this will go on, leading up to some climax on the 30th of October. It is a major crisis for the whole country. And at the same time we have to handle that and we handle this also.

I would have preferred it—with all due respect to the Prime Minister—if it has been possible to deal with these problems one at a time, not try to deal with all of them together, specially in a country like ours. I am leaving out of this, Kahsmir and Punjab and all these things. They are always there.

So, Sir, I would request Shri Shankaranand to ponder over his Motion and not to insist or press it or anything. It will be defeated in any case, but it is better that he realises that it is a mis-directed Motion altogether. He tries to hide the real point. He says only the superficial things, how many buses

were burnt, how many lives were lost, how many bullets were fired—all deplorable things, I agree. But these are the only outward symptoms of something that was happening inside the minds of the people. And those things were misguided, uninformed, ill-informed, out of ignorance of people doing things which they imagined, with no reality at all. And it is the duty of all of us. We call ourselves members of Parliament, we are members of Parliament; surely it is our job to explain to the people what is the real position and not to do things which only lead them on to more higher levels of frenzy and which is not going to solve any problem.

Therefore, Sir, I do not think that there is any place here at all for Shri Shankaranand's Motion. It is a totally misdirected thing and either he should withdraw it or the House will reject it. There is no other way out.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the last occasion, I only had the time to read out the text of the Resolution.** Which I will not repeat now because it has been circulated to all members.

Since the occasion for this discussion has arisen primarily due to the fact that the General Assembly of the United Nations has adopted a Resolution calling for the observance of this year 1975 as the International Women's Year, I would like to begin with by pointing out the significance of this decision. I may say also that it is somewhat ironical that it has fallen to my lot as a representative of the much maligned tribe of bachelors to move this Resolution. I am afraid, the majority of my colleagues, who are married men, do not seem to be so eager or enthusiastic to come forward to take initiative in this matter. If this Resolution has to be implemented, it has to depend on the actions by married men and not by bachelors.

I wish to point out that the Resolution adopted at the 27th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the 18th December, 1972, which called upon all Members-States and people to observe 1975 as the International Women's Year containing the following very pertinent paragraph in its Preamble—I am not going to quote more than that, because there is no time:

> "Considering that it is necessary to strengthen universal recognition of the principles of equality of men and women, *de jure* and *de facto* and that both legal and special measures have to be taken by Member-States which have not yet done so to ensure the implementation of women's rights..."

I wish to point out that the United Nations has laid particular stress on the fact that by equality of men and women, they mean not only *de jure*

*Taking part in the discussion on the Resolution regarding Measures to remove Economic and Social Injustices to Women; *L.S. Deb.*, 11 April 1975.

**Sir, with your permission, I beg to move the following Resolution:

"On the occasion of the declaration by the United Nations of 1975, as 'International Women's Year, this House urges upon the Prime Minister to initiate a comprehensive programme of specific legislative and administrative measures aimed at removing the economic and social injustices, disabilities and discriminations to which Indian women continue to be subjected, particularly in the field of marriage and divorce laws, dowry customs, maternity and child welfare in the rural areas unequal pay for equal work, educational and employment opportunities, vocational training and facilities for working mother."

equality, but also *de facto* equality, not equality which is simply on paper but equality in actual practice and in effect. Secondly, this paragraph has called upon Member-States to take specific legal and social measures to ensure implementation of women right, and this is the point on which I wish to develop my arguments.

I was looking through the proceedings of the Committee which was set up by the United Nations much earlier in 1967 to discuss the Draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. It was a draft at that time. It is a very interesting United Nations Publication. In that I find to my surprise that the record of the positions taken up in this Committee, by the Indian representative and the positive contributions made by the Indian representative are such as to establish the fact that even two decades after Independence in 1967, the official Indian position was retrograde and socially reactionary. It is a very surprising fact and I would not have known it, if I had not gone through this document. I will give one or two examples for the benefit of the Minister.

In Article 6 of this Declaration, the Committee had proposed:

> "All appropriate measures, particularly legislative measures, shall be taken to ensure to women, married or unmarried, equal rights with men in the field of civil law,
>
> All appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure the principle of equality of status of the husband and wife, and in particular, a woman shall have the right to free choice of a husband and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent" etc.

But to all these clauses, amendments were moved by the Indian representative which were of a retrograde character though these amendments were subsequently withdrawn because obviously they could not mobilise support in a body of that kind. But an attempt was made to qualify all these provisions by insertion of a phrase 'as far as possible'. Wherever it said 'measures to ensure', the Indian representative said, "Insert as far as possible." And as regards the right of the woman to a free choice of a husband, here, the Indian proposal was that these words 'free choice of a husband' should be deleted. Later it was withdrawn. Then, again, in Article 6 paragraph 3, we find that even there was a phrase which spoke of the prohibition of child marriage and betrothal of young girls before puberty, the Indian representative—I could not find out who this representative was—moved an amendment calling for the deletion of the phrase 'and betrothal of young girls before puberty.'...

*** *** ***

Then they wanted to delete also provision for necessary social service, including child care facilities which the Indian representative said, should be deleted.

*** *** ***

Then the question of Article 10—the right to work and to a free choice of profession and employment. Free choice of profession and employment—I do not know why anybody should object to this. Here, the Indian representative suggested that the following words should be added:

> "subject to considerations of suitability to a particular type of employment and to professional and vocational advancement."

Of course, all these amendments, not any of them, I think got much support there and finally they were withdrawn. But does this not show that we cannot afford to be complacent, thinking that we are always saying very nice and high-sounding, thinking taking shelter behind general principles, nice words and these commitments which were set up one after the other over the years. Even the new Committee on the Status of Women, I think, has produced quite a good report, quite a valuable report. Perhaps I think they would have yet another committee to go into the recommendations of this Committee.

Behind this facade, I would say, the basic attitude which still persists in our society is not to advance along this road of ensuring equality of the rights of women. I do not mean to suggest that nothing at all has been done in this country or that women have not advanced. They have. But I should say that that has mainly been due to the efforts of women, themselves, to the struggle they have conducted, the movements they have conducted and the agitation they have conducted and very many enlightened women leaders have been thrown up in our country who have been able to focus public opinion on many questions and to some extent they succeeded in getting recommendations on these issues. That is true. But the point here is that in the International Women's Year an obligation is imposed on all Member-States to stop just talking but, by implication, to act and to have specific and concrete schemes and legislative and administrative measures. That is the point. That is the reason I am raising this resolution for discussion. Otherwise, I might not have raised it. And it does not mean that when 1975 is over and when we enter 1976, then all this must be forgotten and relegated to the limbo of history. It is not a matter simply for some speech making during 1975. I know we have to struggle against centuries of conservatism, centuries of irrational prejudices which belong to an obsolete, feudal society which is a thing of the past and which should be a thing of the past but which still dominates our minds. What does it mean? It means women who constitute

roughly half of our society and who are considered good enough to cast votes at the time of elections and so on are being discriminated against? For what reason it is being done? As far as I am able to see there is no fundamental reason for the discrimination except that woman performs a biological function which is different from that of a man. What is the difference between a man and a woman and why should there be any other difference? So, irrational are we! It is so because our minds have got accustomed and our thinking has got accustomed to see women as a kind of specie who is supposed to perform a particular biological function and that we must treat half of this society as though it is not entitled to equal rights with men. Therefore, I would say that this is a long and difficult struggle against the sensitivity, against, many acts of misery suffered by half of our society and cruelty perpetrated upon them. Many instances of injustice and discriminations are found in the pages even of this Report of the Committee on Status of Women. I have no time to go into the quotations and so on because we have limited time at our disposal. But the fact remained that female children in our country from their very birth, since they are considered socially to be an obligation, are considered to be some sort of a burden. There is a tendency in our society to neglect the care of small girl children even before they attain adult age. I find that in the last 70 years between 1901 and 1971 the number of women in our society as compared to men is going down. In 1901 they were 972 for very 1000 males. Now their figure has gone down to 930. The other day in reply to a question, the hon. Minister has replied that there are so many good laws and legislations from which women can benefit equally as men can. But as far as marriage laws are concerned whether it is Hindu Marriage Act or Special Marriages Act, whether it is Succession Act or Adoption and Maintenance Acts, even these acts which are of a specific nature and confer some specific rights and benefits to women, are actually in practice availed of by only a few fraction of women—those who are better educated.

Social welfare measures may or may not be statutory but I think it was implied that by social welfare men and women can be benefited equally. What I am trying to point out is that this is not a reality in the society in which we live. Women who have received benefits of education to some extent, who are economically independent in the sense that they are earning, who are employed and can afford to be self-reliant to some extent, these are actually the only women in our country who can take advantage of whatever positive or beneficial legislative measures are there for them. Only 0.4 per cent of Indian women have got university degrees. Less than 30 lakhs of women are matriculates, 82 per cent are illiterate. In some States like U.P., Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, the figure shows that 92 per cent of women are illiterate. What is the use of making laws which they will never even hear about, which they will never know about? I do not want to go into this at

length. But we should see the reality today and what we find today is that even the educated section of women are not able to maintain their position in public life in the country. It is interesting to see the composition of elected women members of this House, of the Lok Sabha. In 1952, 23 of them were elected. In 1957, 27 were elected; 1962, 33—this is the highest watermark. And in 1967, this came down to 28. And in the last election that is, the present House, there are only 21. I would like to believe that the average women MPs elected to the Lok Sabha are at least more educated than many of our unfortunate sisters in the countryside. But here you see what happens. They are not able to maintain their position even in this House which is of course elected by men and women, both. In this connection I may say that our party has made the proposal in our suggestions for electoral reforms, that in the Indian Parliament there should be fifteen per cent reservation of seats for women.

And, as far as social oppression goes. I don't want to deal with this too long. There are certain interesting questions facing this country and the Government for some time and I would like to know the reaction of the Government. For example, the Law Commission has submitted its Fifty-ninth Report not so long ago to the Government regarding the amendments to the Hindu Marriage Act and the Special Marriage Act. Women's organisations have been demanding that all marriages should be compulsorily registered and no marriage should be considered valid unless it has been compulsorily registered, under whatever registration machinery you would like to set up. People have been demanding that at least in this year 1975, after so many decades why should a husband and wife not be allowed without any impediment to have divorce by mutual consent. What you find today is that under the law there are so many difficulties and so many obstacles. So, the question is whether these things should be removed or not. Then there is the question of right of property for daughters as against sons. All these things are there. I do not want to discuss them in great detail. There have been various proposals and demands made by various women's organisations and certain amendments have been proposed to many of these points, in the Fifty-ninth Report of Law Commission. And I would like to know the reaction of the Government.

And then there is this eternal question of dowry. I think that in this year 1975 we should give some sort of special award or some form of public recognition to that girl whose news came out in the papers, a poor harijan girl of Gonda district in Uttar Pradesh, by name Radhika, who, on her marriage day, when she found that the bridegroom party had arrived, and the bridegroom's father, who had earlier said that he would not ask for dowry, asked for dowry, at the last moment started demanding dowry, this girl Radhika is reported to have come out of the house and driven away the

bridegroom's party saying that if they demand dowry, there is going to be no marriage. I think it is well worth while for the Government to try to find out the facts of this case. Somebody should be sent down to the remote place, somewhere in Gonda district of U.P. to find out who is this girl.

*** *** ***

I think that this girl, Radhika, can be declared to be a sort of a heroine of the Women's International Year. This should be found out.

What about the amendments to the Dowry Prohibition Act? There is another discussion which is likely to come up in the form of Half-an-Hour Discussion later this evening. The Government has got plenty of opportunities to clarify and tell us their thinking on the subject, whether they are prepared to make the demanding of the dowry as a consideration for the marriage as a cognizable offence or not with more stringent penalty, both in terms of fine and imprisonment. In our opinion, this should be made much more strict.

Government itself has admitted in this House that the State Governments which are supposed to administer this Act, do not care even to enforce the existing law. Some figures were given the other day. Uptil 21.12.1974 it was claimed that from all over the country, only thirty-eight cases of the so called violation of the existing Dowry Prohibition Act had been reported. There is also a recent example. We read about it. I think that many members here are aware of the fact that young boys and girls of the Bohra community had come on deputation to Delhi also and met many members of Parliament and Ministers about a year ago, who, in their community, are subjected to all sorts of social oppression in the sense that they are not even given permission to marry by their religious head. In the Bohra community, he is known as the *syedna* whose traditional permission known as *"Raza"* has to be taken. Unless *Syedna* gives *Raza*, no couple can carry in the Bohra community. There has been a big movement going on for social reforms. These young boys and girls, recently in Udaipur, Rajasthan, about 105 couples, defied this oppression of their custom or rule or whatever you may like to call it. Hundreds of couples combined together and conducted a sort of mass marriage. So, the people are fighting in their own way. My point is: What is the Government going to do?

Then I come to the question of working women. After all, I think if the women are not permitted to work to earn for themselves, then they will remain in a position of subjection to men. If they are dependent on men and if they are not able to be self-reliant, then there is no hope of getting equal rights for them.

In our country, in 1961, 27 per cent of the total working force were women and now it has gone down to 18 per cent. This is including the agricultural, agrarian and the industrial and domestic sectors. The trend is that the number of women instead of increasing is going down. There are only about a million or so who can be called educated women, who have got the benefits of education. Out of one million, roughly fifty per cent of them are primary school teachers, 15 per cent of them are clerks and typists, 15 per cent of them are secondary teachers, 7 per cent or so are nurses while 10 per cent and the rest are doctors, lawyers, college teachers, artists, ministers, administrators and so on. These are all together no more than 10 lakhs in our country. The remaining about 95 per cent of women's conditions are the worst—80 per cent of them work as agricultural labourers, 15 per cent work in some factories, in plantations in unorganised industries—sweated industries—and in houses as domestic servants. This is the vast silent community of women whose voice is not heard and who are not in a position to organise themselves, to be articulate enough to express their grievances. It is to this section of women, I suggest, that the Government and the society in general should pay special attention in this International Women's Year. What are we going to do for them?

Sir, now the Labour Minister is here. He knows that even the old ILO convention of equal pay for equal work is not observed in our country. This is one of the very old conventions of ILO and it has also been ratified by the Government of India as Member State of ILO. But only the other day it had been admitted that even in those industries which come under Minimum Wages Legislation like stone breaking, stone crushing, agriculture, plantations, building construction, cashew, etc. even here women are paid less than men even though they are doing the same work. This is not a surprise because in a capitalist system it is the law of maximum profits which operates. Therefore, these women belonging perhaps to the lower castes who can supply good cheap labour to these industries are being exploited by the owners, with the object of maximising their rates of profits.

I think this year in June the sixty-eight international conference of ILO is going to be held in Geneva where they have inscribed even on the agenda the question of equal opportunities and treatment for working women. So, I would like to know from the Labour Minister what the Indian delegation attending this Conference are going to report about the conditions of working women in India. I was glad to hear the other day that at long last the Government is thinking of bringing a Bill to enforce this principle of equal pay for equal work. We know that by itself is not enough. Wherever these women are not organised—even in the case of big organised industries—and whenever the question of giving additional benefits in the form of maternity benefits or creches, etc. has been raised, the employers have taken advantage

to drive those women out of employment. This has happened in cotton textile industry, jute industry and also mines. Several hundreds and thousands of women used to work in these industries but now the statistics show that practically their employment has been reduced to zero. Thirty thousand women used to work in jute mills. Now they have been completely driven out. In the mines also—except one or two occupations on the surface—they have not been kept any longer.

I would end by saying since we are pledged—in words at least—to advancing the country in the direction of a fuller democracy and socialism, which we talk about day in and day out, it would be well also to study the conditions of women in the socialist countries, how they have been able to attain a status of real and complete equality with men in everything and how they are not bothered by this problem of being economically dependent on men and their having to be subject to them in some way or the other. Many friends, I believe, have visited socialist countries and seen it for themselves and they know very well that in the matter of employment, in the matter of careers, in the matter of education, of administration, of State care of children and State care of working mothers, there is something which the socialist countries have really got to be proud about, what they have done for their women because the maker of the first socialist revolution V.I. Lenin said that socialism can never be complete if half the society, 50 per cent of the society, which consists of women, are not brought on a par with men in conditions of equality and that unless this is done, there can never be a proper socialist society. See, Sir, where are we in our country?

Finally, I would end by making a few suggestions. These are not my suggestions. These are part of some of the concrete measures which have been suggested in the programme of the Indian Committee for the International Women's year, I think many of these can be taken up in this year itself if the Government is serious about it. I have already mentioned the need for legislative amendments to make, taking of dowry as a congnisable offence. That is not enough by itself. A campaign should be initiated for social boycott of marriages in which dowry has been given or accepted as a consideration for marriage. Let the members of Parliament at least take the resolve during this year that in their own particular areas, they will organise at least social boycott of one marriage where dowry has been given or taken as a consideration for marriage. Let us start something. Then, Sir, they have proposed free legal aid and homes for women who are in distress due to cruelty and ill-treatment by their husbands. They have no place to go. Where are they supposed to go?

*** *** ***

They have proposed that at least in each major city there should be at least one home set up this year where women who are in distress due to ill-treatment by their husbands can go and take shelter if necessary and also get free legal aid. I do not think this is a thing involving crores and crores of rupees. But, it would meet I think, a very urgent requirement. Fourthly, better maternity facilities in the countryside so that children at least are able to survive. At least one trained midwife in every village. How many deaths are there of children due to lack of these most elementary facilities? They have also suggested more health centres naturally, in the villages for children and at least one primary and two subsidiary health centres in each block. For women agricultural workers, they have suggested some seasonal crech system where they can have their children looked after while they work in the fields. They have proposed that each State should have at least two vocational training centres for women. There is some provision in the programme which the Minister was referring to for vocational training, but, nothing is spelt out. It is impossible to say from that what is the extent of this programme, to how many people they will cater and what are the types of vocational training going to be given and so on. Here, we are trying to concretise the demand more in the sense that each State would have the target that at least two vocational training centres should be set up during this year. Then, there should be no restriction on employment of married women. Still, we find these things. In Calcutta, the other day, I found an extreme example, not of employment but, where a school, quite an old and well established school expelled a girl of that school because she is married. When they discovered that she has married, they said they will not keep a gir. who has married and they expelled her. This is a strange thing. Employers and owners of companies and concerns in many places, as we know well once they get married, apparently they claim, the employers claim that these girls are no longer able to spend all their time for their job. I do not know. A few years ago, a big campaign was carried on by women employees in these chemical and pharmaceutical concerns, in Bombay, I know, because some of these companies had introduced a rule that if the woman gets married, she cannot keep her job. This is a fantastic state of affairs.

Then cheap canteens or hostels for working women in towns. This is also mentioned briefly in the programme the Minister had told us about, but nothing has been spelt out. Then creches and nurseries for working women. It is just impossible for her to work, unless she is provided by the State with creches and nurseries where her children can be left during working hours.

Finally, an adult literacy campaign among women. Naturally this will be mainly in the rural areas. A campaign for removing adult illiteracy among women should be carried out. Nobody objects to their being illiterate when it comes to casting votes during elections. All of us get elected through a

large number of votes of women, but the moment the election is over, nobody is bothered about the fact that 85-90 per cent of them are still sunk in illiteracy after so many years of Independence. This is a shame to our country.

Therefore, the Government, which is led by a women Prime Minister, should come forward and inspire people and mobilise young people to go to the countryside and launch a campaign for the removal of adult illiteracy among women. This has been done in many other countries. The Minister knows about it.

I do not wish to take more time. I have just indicated some of the facts of the problem and suggested a few concrete steps which can be taken. Although we have been hearing all sorts of talk, goody-goody talk, we are lagging far-far behind the international standards enjoined upon us, the minimum standards in terms of the resolution of the UN General Assembly. At least this should be on our conscience that we, men, must give a good account of ourselves in this year before the world community and before our own people.

*** *** ***

The point is that my purpose in moving this motion was a limited one, and that was to initiate a discussion for the first time on this issue particularly since this happens to be the International Women's Year. To that extent, my purpose has been more than served. The record shows that about 22 hon. members have participated in the debate and I am extremely grateful to them; I am particularly grateful because I find that, since we are normally accustomed to debate political issues and party issues here, we do not generally get an opportunity to speak and debate on issues of this type which cut across party lines. I am grateful to many members of the ruling Party who spoke here and who have shown that they are extremely serious, they are motivated by a sense of urgency on this issue of women's rights and they are not at all satisfied with the performance of their own government. That has been made clear by a number of speeches here. Particularly I would like to congratulate my friend. Shri Syed Ahmed Aga,* who made a very courageous speech on a delicate subject of this type.

I only want to say this that I am extremely disappointed over the response of the Government because this motion of mine was not brought just at any time, in a vacuum. It has been brought in the specific context of a Resolution adopted by the United Nations of which our country happens to be a member. And now I find that the amendment which has been proposed and which is being sponsored or supported by the Government is even less specific and

* Referring to Shri Syed Ahmed Aga, MP.

more vague than the Resolution adopted by an international body like the United Nations. When an international body passes a Resolution, we expect that to be in more general terms or more vague terms, if you like to call it that way. But when member, countries are called upon to translate that into action, then their Resolutions or motions are supposed to be more specific and more concrete. On that aspect, I must say, I am most disappointed. I have put a few concrete things into the body of my Resolution and those are the things which the official amendment wants to delete.

Secondly, they want to inject this phrase 'as far as possible'. I do not think it is necessary because everybody knows that it is understood. By passing a Resolution here, all these things are not going to be accomplished in one year. Everybody knows that. This is a fight going on for centuries and may take a good many decades more. It is not going to be fought within the confines of this Chamber; it is an integral part of the struggle for democracy and socialism—the struggle for women's rights. But I wanted a Resolution to be passed here which would at least give some encouragement, some hope, some sustenance, to those progressive forces who are fighting outside on this issue.

But, Sir, the use of this phrase 'as far as possible', which I had occasion to point out in my earlier speech, was a favourite phrase employed by the Indian delegates in the past at meetings of the United Nations' Sub Committees, who went on moving amendments in the name of India, saying in every proposal, "Put in the term 'as far as possible', 'as far as possible'". But they could not get it passed in the United Nations; they had to withdraw those amendments ultimately. And here again that phrase is being put in. Mind you, I have chosen my words very carefully; I did not say in my Resolution, specific legislative and administrative measures for removing the economic and social injustices; I have only said 'aimed at removing'—whose outlook, whose perspective, is to move towards removing. But even there they say, "No; you must put in the phrase 'as far as possible' ". If you want to limit and qualify every thing in this way, it does not give us much confidence that the Government is serious about the matter.

The only thing that is specific and that has emerged in the debate is the assurance—I take it as an assurance—given by the hon. Minister for Labour that a Bill for giving legislative sanction to the principle of equal pay for equal work is going to be introduced, possibly, in this very session itself. Very good. That is a good thing, long over-due. But there are many other matters on which I had expected some specific assurance. That did not come. I was expecting Dr. Sarojini Mahishi* to say that at least the recommendations

*Referring to Smt. Sarojini Mahishi, the then Minister of State in the Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs.

made in the 59th Report of the Law Commission of India, where they themselves have recommended certain amendments to the Hindu Marriages Act and the Special Marriages Act, are under active consideration or will be given legislative shape or scope sometime or the other. Not a word was said about it. I do not know what the difficulty is. What is the difficulty? Why cruelty, for example, or separation should not be made an independent ground for divorce instead of being only a ground for legal separation? Why a husband and wife who by mutual consent want to have a divorce are compelled under the law to wait at least for one year before their petition is even heard? Why? What for? These things cannot be changed? They cannot be amended? What is the difficulty?

In a way I am disappointed at the total outlook of the Government. The Prime Minister came here. I am thankful to her. By intervening in the debate at least it will get some more publicity and some more people in the country will at least have some idea that the subject was debated in the House. She did not say anything specifically. She uttered some very good and noble sentiments. That is true. But we wanted some assurance from the Government. That has not been forthcoming at all.

I do not want to raise all these issues again—the question of employment opportunities for women, educational opportunities, vocational training, etc. My friend, Shri Arvind Netam* has tried his best. I know he is working within the constraints of certain financial allocations which the Prime Minister was good enough to point out and remind us that the axe will fall first and foremost on these things, on the allotment for these very social reform measures. So, we cannot expect much. There is no use talking about the Fifth Plan because the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission has said that it is as good as dead. He made a statement only day before yesterday. We do not have much to look forward.

I am the last man to think that this struggle for the rights of women is to base itself primarily or to base its hopes and aspirations primarily, on what the Government is going to do. I fully agree with Shri Arvind Netam. It is not by looking just at the Government that we are going to solve this problem. It is a question of much wider awakening of the conscience and a much bigger sustained movement which has to be carried on and primarily this has to be carried on, if this is going to be the Government's attitude, by several other organizations outside, by mass organizations, by women's organizations, by social organizations and by political parties. Since we are at the moment engaged in a dialogue about electoral reforms which has been

* Referring to Shri Arvind Netam, the then Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare and in the Department of Culture.

started the other day and which is continuing, I will remind the House again that my Party is going to insist on this provision that at least 15% of seats in the Parliament, in the Lok Sabha, must be reserved for women. Why not? I do not understand it. If out of 525 members, we cannot have even 70 or 75 women members, what is the use of talking about this?

*** *** ***

I am faced with a choice. If I insist on my resolution as it is, then the Government, because the members are sitting in the hall waiting for a party meeting and you have to only press the bell and the majority will be summoned and my resolution will be defeated. I do not think it will be a good thing also for the world to know that by a majority vote the Indian Parliament defeated a resolution like mine.

I also do not want that in the International Women's Year people should know in other countries and the United Nations should know, that the sovereign Parliament of India dispersed after talking out this subject and failed to adopt any resolution at all. That also will not be a very good thing. Therefore, after much deliberation, Sir, I have come to the conclusion that although it is a very unpleasant thing for me, I am willing to accept this amendment at least as a preliminary commitment, which is being forced on the Government by means of a unanimous resolution of this House. In that case, it will read as follows. If Smt. Savitri Shyam's* amendment is accepted by the entire House, it will read as follows:

> "On the occasion of the declaration by the United Nations of 1975, as 'International Women's Year', this House urges upon the Prime Minister to initiate a comprehensive programme of specific legislative and administrative measures aimed at removing, as far as possible, the economic and social injustices, disabilities and discriminations to which Indian women continue to be subjected."

All the detailing out of it, according to this amendment should be deleted. Alright. But, at least this Resolution, if amended, will still bind the Government down to a programme.

*** *** ***

Then the only other alternative for me is to withdraw my Resolution and we all go home without anything, which I don't wish to do. It will get us bad odour, I can tell you, in the international community. It will be a confession of complete impotence of this Parliament, where the spirit in which so many

*Referring to Smt. Savitri Shyam, MP.

members have spoken is certainly in favour of my Resolution. Member after member, even of the Congress Party has said that there is nothing wrong with the Resolution and that it should be supported. What am I to do? The only alternative is that we tell the world that we were incapable of passing any Resolution. Soon, 1975 will be over and we can all comfortably forget about International Women's Year and relapse back into our old centuries slumber. I want something to be done here, which will go in the record that at least Government was committed to a programme of specific legislative measures and administrative measures. What are those specific measures, Government will have to tell us from time to time and we can catch them from time to time.

*** *** ***

Better than not committing them to anything. At least, I believe that the movement outside is not going to go to sleep. People are not in the same condition as they were years ago. People are awake. They are awakening. They are going to fight. I know many members this side are equally as dissatisfied as I am. I have appealed to the Minister. I have appealed to the friends opposite. But, they say that there are difficulties; if the phrase 'as far as possible' is not included here, then, they do not know to what extent they will become committed. I do not understand this argument anyway. As for the rest, about marriage and divorce and all that, I understand, there may be some difficulties just now, because it may be mis-interpreted by some communities. We have to take society as it is and not as we would like to be.

I do not think any reaction or response is going to come now. What is this Mr. Raghu Ramaiah*? Your wife is a leader of women movement. If I go and tell her that you sat here, doing like this, you will get into trouble at home, I can tell you.

Without taking up further time, I accept the amendment which has been moved by Shrimati Savitri Shyam as the lesser evil, which I have to accept. I commend this Resolution, as amended for the unanimous acceptance of the House.**

---

*Referring to Shri Raghu Ramaiah, the then Minister of Works and Housing and Parliamentary Affairs.

**The Resolution, as amended, was adopted. The amended Resolution reads as below:

"On the occasion of the declaration by the United Nations of 1975, as 'International Women's Year', this House urges upon the Prime Minister to initiate a comprehensive programme of specific legislative and administrative measures aimed at removing as far as possible, the economic and social injustices, disabilities and discrimination to which Indian women continue to be subjected."

DEVELOPMENT BOARDS IN MAHARASHTRA AND GUJARAT*

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, this subject which has formed the content of this discussion is, I think, more complex and complicated than it can be profitably discussed in this short span of time. However, Shri Chavan** who initiated the discussion and who has considerable experience and knowledge of the background of this development, threw light on many aspects of the working of these Development Boards. What I could gather from his speech—though he did not spell it out—was that he was in favour of such Regional Development Boards being wound up. Unfortunately, they have been brought into existence by means of a constitutional provision 371(2). I do not know whose brain-child it was, whose brain-child this amendment to the Constitution originally was. I am afraid, I do not know. I will have to go and do some research.

*** *** ***

Anyway, as far as Maharashtra is concerned these Boards have been formed for Vidarbha, Marathwada and the rest of Maharashtra which also of course, includes the Konkan region. The other day, you may recall, there was a discussion on the demand of some members that there should be a separate board only for Konkan because it is a very backward and undeveloped area. They did not say that Development Boards of this type were useless and would not be able to do away with these regional imbalances or help in the work of development. They were pleading for a separate Board specifically for Konkan, whereas some other members, who were advocating a separate State for Vidarbha, were opposed to this idea of Development Boards. It seems that it is quite a controversial issue on which different point of view and different opinions can clash with each other also. As far as I can see from the way these Boards have been formed, the Constitutional provision itself does contain—I should admit,—shall contain an element of something which goes against the whole democratic tradition and democratic structure of our polity. I am referring to the special powers and responsibilities given to the

*Participating in the Short Duration Discussion on the constitution and the functioning of the Development Boards, appointed under article 371(2) of the Constitution in Maharashtra and Gujarat; *R.S. Deb.*, 11 September 1996.

**Referring to Shri S.B. Chavan, MP.

Governor. This is something which is really unique, which is quite unprecedented, I should say. And, naturally, when the Governor discharges his responsibilities, special powers, in a particular way, he may be able to satisfy, to some extent, the aspirations of the people. But, on the other hand, if he acts in a different way, it may have the opposite effect. I mean, the whole thing is depending on the whims and fancies of a particular Governor. I do not think this is very suitable for a democratic structure. But this has been done and has now been enshrined in the Constitution. I would feel myself that these district boards cannot be abolished overnight or something. They have come to stay for some time. They have been in existence only for two years. Any such new set-up which is introduced requires a little more time for us to be able to make an objective assessment of its utility or otherwise. A little more time is required. But, in any case, it is quite obvious that in such a structure much would depend on the following things.

Firstly, assuming that the Governor does, with all good intentions and honest intentions, provide for some kind of equitable distribution of funds, there has to be a greater emphasis on proper monitoring. Secondly, there has to be a much greater involvement of the representatives of the local people in the work of these Boards. At the moment, I do not know what is happening in respect of that. Thirdly, it is very likely that there are some vested interests from the earlier situation, may be there is some kind of a stranglehold of some people, some local bureaucrats and so on, which also requires to be loosened. Without loosening that stranglehold, the whole idea that a Regional Development Board would be more democratic than the previous system, in the sense that it is nearer to the people and therefore it would be in a position to appreciate much more effectively their aspirations and to try to help them, may or may not work. If it is all left to the Governor, what happens? As Shri Chavan has said, the performance, up to now, of the Governor, the way he has been discharging his responsibilities, has not been very favourable and has not led to very significant results either. But, on the other hand, Sir, I would say this. I think basically, the whole question is one of regional imbalances, whether in Maharashtra or anywhere else. In Maharashtra, the question of Vidarbha has come up; in Bihar, the question of Jharkhand has come up; in Assam, the question of Bodoland has come up.

In Bengal, the question of Gorkhaland has come up and many more will come. I feel myself—whether I am right or not, I can't say—but maybe in ten years' time or fifteen years' time, the map of our country may undergo many changes. It may not look exactly like the map of India that we are seeing today. Generally, we pledged ourselves to the principle of greater autonomy of devolution of powers from the Centre to the States. We have been trying to restructure the Centre-State relations in such a way. We have not done very much about it as yet. But we have pledged ourselves to doing it in such

a way that a much greater measure of autonomy devolves on the States. Naturally, there are regional aspirations which are projected and reflected in all these different movements which are going on, which one may support or may not support. That is a different matter. But I think, in the long run, it will not be possible any longer to keep such aspirations and urges suppressed, whether it takes the form of separate Statehood or whether it takes the form of some autonomous councils of some kind or whether it takes the form of setting up statutory Development Boards. This is a matter which, of course, is open to discussion. But the same urge is basically behind all these things and that is the urge to remove the regional imbalance and to see that different regions and parts of the country get a fair deal and get equitable treatment and nobody should feel that one region is kept lagging back while others are able to progress and go ahead. So, I think in this particular case when we are referring to the Regional Boards, mainly in Maharashtra, perhaps all that can be done now is that we cannot abolish these Boards overnight. They have been functioning for about two years or so up to now. I think it is too early to pronounce a judgment on them. Can their functioning be improved? Can they really be brought nearer to the aspirations of the people at the ground level? Can their functioning really be made more democratic? One big hurdle in the way of course, is the special responsibility and power given to the Governor, which I don't think is a very desirable thing at all. But people at the lower ground level have got to be more actively involved in the functioning of these Boards. They have to be given more powers—not the Governor but the Boards—and there has to be better monitoring of whatever money is being sanctioned for them. Any attempt to dominate within the Boards by some vested interests, who may be bureaucrats, may be somebody else—I do not know—should be identified and resisted. I do not know what exactly was the thrust of Shri Chavan's argument.

*** *** ***

So, this is not a question on which we have to say either yes or no. The point is, these Boards have come into existence. We did not bring them into existence.

*** *** ***

Those regions which have been neglected and kept backward will naturally require more resources. That is the meaning of equitable distribution. But there must be better monitoring of those resources also. As we know in this country, vast sums of money can be allocated. But one has to keep a watch on where that money goes, how it is spent, whether it reaches the people for whose benefit it is actually meant and all that. So some procedure

has to be worked out to make these Regional Boards in Maharashtra more effective.

As far as Konkan is concerned, the other day, while replying to the discussion, I had said that the question of a separate Board for Konkan is an issue on which we at least have got an open mind. We have not closed the matter. If it is necessary, if we find that one of the Boards which have been set up in one or the other parts of Maharashtra, is not in a position to give any kind of fair deal to the Konkan, well, we will review it again and we will see whether it requires to be provided for in a different way. But I am surprised that the people are so much agitated and worked up about Vidarbha but nobody has said much about the Konkan region, which is by far the most backward of all and I do not know how much revenue it generates, but I am sure that it is really a reservoir of labour going to the city of Bombay to work in the mills and the factories there. Most of them are Konkani workers. They don't have anything to sell but their labour power. And that is a backward area. Sir, anyway, all these have to be taken into account and whether the Regional Boards are the best method of doing it, is to be examined. You see, it could not have come up at all if the State Government of Maharashtra had been more responsive to the regional aspirations of the people and had not neglected the whole question of regional imbalances, but apparently that has led to this situation now, and let us put our heads together and try to find a way out and see whether these Regional Boards can be put on a more democratic and equitable basis so that they can meet the needs of the people more effectively. Sir, that's all I have got to say.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND WORKERS WELFARE

THE INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT (STANDING ORDERS) AMENDMENT BILL, 1960*

Mr. Speaker, as far as this Bill goes, there is nothing very much to say about it, and as far as it seeks to cover smaller units which were not covered hitherto, it is a good thing. But the trouble is, I feel, the Labour Ministry is not paying sufficient attention or, perhaps, is wishing to avoid at this stage the deeper implication of the whole question of Standing Orders. For one thing, this Bill, by asking this House to approve of its extension to smaller unit employees, is implying our approval of the Standing Orders Act and the rules made under that and all that we are now asked is for extension of the measure to smaller units.

So, here I wish to raise certain points. Because, as far as trade unions are concerned. I believe, including in the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), there is a growing feeling in this country that the provisions of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act have become the major sources of industrial disputes and one of the major causes of aggravation of industrial discontent in this country. I think there are statistics with the Labour Ministry which will bear me out that next only perhaps to the question of wages, the disputes arising out of the application and interpretation of Standing Orders form the next biggest category of disputes which have to be dealt with from year-to-year by the Ministries in the various States and also at the Centre.

That whole question has been bypassed. Here is a very innocent and innocuous Bill, being brought forward simply as a sort of technical thing. But we must go much deeper into this.

After all, what does this Industrial Employment Act say? The very opening sentence which defines the purpose of this Act reads as follows:

> "An Act to require employers in industrial establishments formally to define conditions of employment under them."

That is all. It is stated here that employers in industrial establishments should define with sufficient precision the conditions of employment under them and make those conditions known to the workmen. That was the purpose of this Act when it was initially brought forward. As my hon. friend

---

* Participating in the discussion on the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Amendment Bill, 1960; *L.S. Deb.*, 13 December 1960.

Shri Banerjee* has said, in a situation where there was no regulation or uniformity and standardisation of conditions, this was welcomed. But with the passage of years, this Act has become, what one might call a weapon in the hands of certain employers—and I should say a majority of employers—in the name of maintaining and enforcing discipline. Of course, we all want discipline. Without discipline, no industrial undertaking can work. We want discipline both on the part of labour and on the part of management. But in the name of enforcing and maintaining discipline, this Act and the rules made thereunder, that is, the Standing Orders, they are being increasingly utilised as a weapon for harassing workmen for no fault of their own, for victimising them, in some cases for making unilateral changes in working conditions under cover of the Standing Orders and even in many cases, which have always been brought to the notice of the Labour Ministry, for trying to suppress normal activities and rights of trade unions. This question, therefore, requires going into now much more deeply and it is not enough simply to bring forward a Bill of this kind in my opinion.

The hon. Deputy Minister may dispute what I have said. I do not know what he is going to say. But I would like to point out to him that in the Industrial Disputes Act of 1947—if he will kindly refer to the Second Schedule of that Act—there is very clearly a recognition or admission of the reality to which I have been referring. At a certain stage the Government of India came forward and itself amended the Industrial Disputes Act recognising that the question of standing orders, their application, their interpretation, etc. have become a very fruitful source of discontent and disputes. Therefore, we find that in the Second Schedule of the Industrial Disputes Act, where the matters which are within the jurisdiction of labour courts are set out, the first three items are the following. With your permission, Sir, I will read them out. The first matter here is:

> "The propriety or legality of an order passed by an employer under the Standing Orders."

That means, a dispute arising out of this can be brought within the jurisdiction of a labour court. This was not there originally. The second item is:

> "The application and interpretation of Standing Orders."

The third item, also connected with this question, is:

> "The discharge or dismissal of workmen, including reinstatement of or grant of relief to workmen wrongfully dismissed."

---

* Referring to Shri S.M. Banerjee, MP.

I submit that the specific inclusion of these matters within the Second Schedule of the Industrial Disputes Act shows that the Government and the Labour Ministry are quite well aware of the fact that a very large number of disputes arise out of these very questions. Therefore, this was a good thing that these things were introduced.

But the trouble now, to which I wish to come to is—and that is a very serious thing and I am sure the hon. Deputy Minister knows about it—that a number of recent pronouncements and judgments of the Supreme Court of India on disputes arising out of the Standing Orders, in effect have now rendered absolutely invalid or have negated the value of these items in the Industrial Disputes Act which are referred to the jurisdiction of the labour courts. I do not want to be very long about this, but I would just draw his attention and the attention of the House to the judgment of the Supreme Court in the very well-known case of the Doom Dooma Tea Company where a case of dismissal under the Standing Orders arose which was challenged. The lower tribunal went into the case and held that this dismissal was unduly harsh and unjust. Then, when they went in appeal to the Supreme Court, the Supreme Court held as follows:

> "This question must be considered in the light of limits which are imposed by law on the jurisdiction of tribunals in dealing with such a dispute."

They go on to say:

> "Normally the awarding of proper punishment for misconduct under the Standing Orders is the function of the management, and unless there is valid justification the tribunal should be slow to interfere with the exercise of that function."

Later on they have said:

> "...the tribunal overlooked the fact that it was not within its competence to reappreciate the evidence in the present enquiry, and that introduces a serious infirmity in the award."

What the Supreme Court is saying is that even if a dispute under the Second Schedule to the Industrial Disputes Act comes up, it is referred by Government to a labour court, that labour court in effect has not got the power to go into the merits of the case or re-examine the evidence or anything of that kind.

Only in this morning's *Statesman*, I find a report of another case in the Supreme Court regarding the Lord Krishna Textile Mills, UP. This morning it is reported at some length. It is a very similar case. Similar issues have

come up. This was a case arising out of section 6-E (2) b of the United Provinces Industrial Disputes Act. That is a State Act. Here the Supreme Court held as follows:

> "The Court held that all that the Tribunal could do when dealing with an application under section 33(2)b is to consider whether a *prima facie* case for according approval is made out or not."

Approval means approval for dismissal:

> "In the present case the Court found that the Tribunal had proceeded to examine the evidence and discuss whether the misconduct had been proved, and in the opinion of the Supreme Court it had lost sight of the limitations on its authority in doing so. On examination of the Award the Court held that the Tribunal had assumed jurisdiction not vested in it by law and consequently its refusal to accord approval must be set aside."

*** *** ***

There are a number of cases.

My point is that a very serious situation has arisen now. There are Standing Orders. Disputes are arising every day out of the interpretation and application of these Orders. The Second Schedule of the Industrial Disputes Act apparently gives the workmen an opportunity to agitate such a matter before the labour court but now the Supreme Court steps in and by a number of judgments has held that even in such a case nothing can be gone into. The merits of the case, the evidence, nothing can be gone into. All that the labour court or the tribunal can do is to see whether the management has dismissed a particular person in accordance with the procedure laid down under the Standing Orders and see if the procedure has been correct. That is all the court is concerned with. This means that unless a more radical amendment of the Industrial Disputes Act itself and also of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act is effected—I am pleading for such an amendment which, I hope, the Government will consider and bring forward—this type of a Bill which has come now is quite useless. It has no meaning. Unless such an amendment is made, it means that tribunals will have no power whatever to judge on the fairness or reasonableness or otherwise of an employer's actions. In that case I should like to know why the Government, either at the Centre or in the States, should bother to refer these cases to arbitration, to tribunals or to labour courts. Why do they do it when they know that the Supreme Court decision is there preventing the labour courts or tribunals from going into the merits of the case? It seems to me perfectly ridiculous to go on referring such cases, raising such hopes and illusions in the minds of workmen and each

time that tribunal or labour court is bound by these previous decisions of the hon. Supreme Court, which binds its hands. Therefore, I would like to say here that this is one basic question which must be considered. A part of these things have been raised by my hon. friend, Shri Banerjee. I think the root of the mischief as far as the day to day disputes are concerned, lies in the Model Standing Orders which have been framed by the Ministry itself. That is the real cause of the trouble. If I may take a little time over this, in these Model Standing Orders which the employers are expected to conform to, it is said, provided the Certifying Officer is satisfied that any Standing Orders submitted to him by an employer conform to these rules, and they cover all the various things which have been indicated, he can certify it. In fact, the circulation of the Standing Orders by the Certifying Officer to the Unions concerned before he does the certifying, for their opinion, is simply restricted to this point. You cannot object on any other ground. The only objection you may be able to raise is that a particular clause or section of the Standing Orders does not conform to the Model laid down by the Government in this Act. You cannot question the fairness or reasonableness of any particular provision on the Model Standing Orders, particularly on clauses 3, 4, 5 and 6 which deal with misconduct, how misconduct is defined, how misconduct will be treated, all the trade unions have been agitated for years together—all the unions. The way this has been defined puts arbitrary powers in the hands of the employers and gives them unlimited discretion to carry out any sort of victimisation or punishment or impose the penalties which they please.

I do not wish to take much time. For example, the following shall be treated as misconduct: there is a long list. The very first one, I may give as an instance: It says: wilful insubordination or disobedience to any lawful or reasonable order of a superior. Sounds all right. But the trouble is this. In another Act it is laid down that an employer cannot introduce any changes in the working conditions of his employees without going through a certain procedure. If a particular employer, all of a sudden, introduces unilaterally some change in the working conditions, to the detriment of the workmen in that particular factory of course, the hon. Deputy Minister may say, you can catch him under the other Act if he does not follow the procedure laid down. That is true. In the meantime, suppose he introduces a certain change and the workmen concerned object to it and say, we think this is wrong, we do not want to abide by it, immediately,—whatever remedy you may seek in the court will be later on—under rule 3(a) of the Standing Orders, for disobedience of any lawful or reasonable order of a superior, action can be taken.

*** *** ***

You can go to the court later on. In the meantime, this man is charge-sheeted or given a warning or something like that. There is striking work or

inciting others to strike work in contravention of the provisions of any law. Obviously this indicates illegal strikes. For illegal strikes penalties are laid down—in contravention of the provisions of any law. But, we know, we can cite hundreds of cases of perfectly legal strikes which have not contravened any provisions of any law, in which these Standing Orders are applied. After that, one can indulge in litigation in all the tribunals, High Court and the Supreme Court. A case takes three years. In the meantime, using this power, they charge-sheet and suspend and very often dismiss the workmen.

The major trouble with these Model Standing Orders as my hon. friend Shri S.M. Banerjee mentioned, is this. There is a procedure laid down after you have charge-sheeted a man and brought charges against him. What is the procedure laid down? He who is the prosecutor is also the judge. Of course, somebody will say, the discipline of an establishment or industrial concern has to be maintained like this. The management charges the man with a particular offence. The only course laid down here is that an enquiry will be held by the management itself and the decision will be made. There is no appeal against that. Even at this so-called enquiry which is held by the management within its own closed doors, there is no provision for that accused workmen to be represented by even a representative of his union. Even that is not there in the Model Standing Orders. From my own personal experience I can say this. Perhaps the hon. Deputy Minister knows that because that is a dispute going on for a long time and the Central Labour Ministry is well acquainted with it. Under section 3 of the Industrial Employment Act, there is a provision which says that the draft Standing Orders submitted under this section shall be accompanied by a statement giving the prescribed particulars of the workmen employed in the industrial establishment. The rules say that these prescribed particulars mean, the total number of workmen employed, the number of permanent workmen, the number of temporary workmen, the number of *badlis*, etc. That means, that when the Standing Orders are submitted for certification, the employer is also expected to submit a statement giving all these particulars. The hon. Deputy Minister knows that in one of the biggest industries of this country and the biggest earner of foreign exchange in our country, that is the jute industry, for the last 11 years, we have not been able to get at the employers to submit this statement as to the number of *badlis*, permanent, temporary, etc., workmen in different categories that they employed. Why? Because, they say, we are carrying out rationalisation. Since 1949—this is 1960—for 11 years, rationalisation and modernisation, they say, are being carried on, and therefore, we can never state at any single point of time how many of our workmen are permanent, how many are temporary, how many are *badli*, and so on. That is the kind of conformity with the Standing Orders and the applicability of these rules that we find in practice. The result of it in the jute industry is, that perhaps nearly half of the workmen

employed out of the 2 lakh workers are no longer permanent. Non-permanent people are working for years together. They never become permanent. They are always shown as casual or *badli* or temporary, etc. These are some of the things we find.

The most serious thing as I said, is the procedure for enquiry which is laid down in cases of allegations of misconduct against a workman before action is taken against him. He cannot be represented by any union representative there. He has no appeal against the decision of the management.

What I wish to say in conclusion is this. Will the hon. Deputy Minister enlighten us on one thing? For the last so many years, we have been trying to evolve a procedure of arriving at certain agreed tripartite decisions through the machinery of the Indian Labour Conference and its standing committees, sub-committees and so on, a procedure which we at least have welcomed very much and have tried to participate in and co-operate with, to the best of our ability. In this tripartite Indian Labour Conference, the hon. Deputy Minister knows, in 1958, at the 16th Conference in Naini Tal, we have adopted a unanimous tripartite agreement. The Central Government, the State Governments, the employers' federations and all the Central trade union federations have agreed to a code of discipline. A part of the code of discipline is the grievance procedure. This very Ministry has come forward with a draft of a model grievance procedure. That is there incorporated in the tripartite agreement. When a worker has a grievance for which he wants redress, there is a procedure laid down there. All the various successive stages through which he can represent his case, are mentioned. At each stage there is provision laid down as to how the employer must deal with it. How he must act, at what stage the union comes in, what rights the workman has at the stage of enquiry, all these things are laid down. I want to know what is there in common between that tripartite agreement and the grievance procedure and these Model Standing Orders which also have been framed by this Ministry. A most anomalous position has been created. On the one side, there is the statute laying down Model Standing Orders. On the other hand, outside the field of legislation, there is a unanimously agreed code of discipline and grievance procedure. If you compare the two, there is nothing in common between the two. Which one is to prevail? How do you expect the employers to give them the benefit of these Model Standing Orders, because this is a statute, something of a higher order? Yet, we have asked them voluntarily to accept the grievance procedure which they signed at Naini Tal. They may sign it, but why should they observe it? If it comes to a pinch, they will jettison that and prefer this every time. This gives them much more power, and this is the law. In fact, we have been told, I do not know whether it is a correct report that the Labour Minister of Bombay State has, on an occasion, been heard to remark that wherever he finds that the tripartite agreement

comes into conflict with the provisions of the statute, the provisions of the statute must naturally prevail. Then, what is the good of these tripartite conferences to which we are taken every year?

*** *** ***

Therefore, I wish to suggest that first of all the Industrial Disputes Act should be amended so that tribunals, labour courts and such like bodies are given that power, which is now taken away by the Supreme Court decisions. They should have the power to go into the merits and evidence of the cases referred to them. There is no danger of discipline breaking down because, after all, the power of referring these cases to the labour court or tribunal is kept securely in the hands of the Ministry. The cases cannot go to the tribunals automatically. So, when they do go, the tribunal should have some power which it has not got now.

Secondly, my suggestion is that these Model Standing Orders should at least be brought into conformity with the provisions of the agreed tripartite grievance procedure. In fact, I want to ask the Deputy Minister why those relevant provisions of the code of discipline and grievance procedure, are not bodily incorporated in the Model Standing Orders. These Model Standing Orders, I say, have no validity after that tripartite agreement. They should be scrapped wholesale and should be substituted by the provisions, principles and ideas behind the tripartite agreement. Otherwise, what is its value?

These are very important, basic questions. Simply saying that establishments employing less than 100 persons will now have the benefit of this Act is no good. That is all right, but the point is: why are you asking us to imply approval of this Act and rules? We do not wish to give that approval.

These are my submissions. I hope the Deputy Minister will take them into consideration.

The amending Bill which has been brought forward on behalf of the Government has proved to be rather disappointing, because the two amendments which are proposed here are, both of them, essentially of a negative type. We have always been pressing for further amendments of the Minimum Wages Act in a positive direction so that constant improvement of the Act could be brought about, since it is, actually speaking, the only minimum wages legislation which exists in this country. But from the amendments proposed we find that all that is being done is to take away something which was there, and nothing is being added in a positive direction to improve the working of the Act by assimilating the experience that we have had of the working of the Act to suggest certain improvements in that direction.

The first amendment aims at total removal of any time-limit for the fixation of these minimum wages. If I may say so, this is a confession of failure on Government's part, nothing else, because everybody knows what happened to the time-limits which were fixed in the original Act, and which had to be extended on more than one occasion by further amendments brought before this House. Because the Central Government was not in a position or did not care to exert sufficient pressure upon the various State Governments to fix the minimum wages for the scheduled occupations within the time-limit which had been specified in the Act, we were faced with this unedifying spectacle of the Government having to come before this House time and again in order to get the time-limit extended.

*** *** ***

Therefore, now the simple remedy is sought of removing the time-limit altogether, and saying that the wages should be fixed within the shortest possible time.

If the time-limit stipulated in an Act virtually becomes a dead letter, I admit there is no point keeping a time-limit like that. Certainly it does not help anybody to go on extending the time-limit, knowing all the time in your own mind that nothing will happen after that also. The result was that those

* Participating in the discussion on the Minimum Wages (Amendment) Bill, 1961; *L.S. Deb.*, 10 August 1961.

interested in seeing that minimum rates of wages were not fixed,—I do not mean the Government—the employers or may be some other people in various regions or States who are not interested in speedy fixation of minimum wages, were encouraged to take this view that if they could somehow or other manage to delay matters till the next time-limit expired, after that they would be relieved of the responsibility of fixing the minimum wages. That is what went on happening once, twice, thrice. And the Central Government was not in a position or did not have adequate power, or did not press the matter hard enough, to see that these time-limits were properly observed. Therefore, I say it is a confession of failure.

I do not think it makes much difference, if that experience counts for anything, whether you have a time-limit on paper or not, apparently that is not going to be the deciding factor, but I would say one thing, that as far as employments in Schedule No. 2 are concerned,—it refers mainly to agricultural labour—they cannot be put on the same basis as the employments in Schedule No. 1. Government has stated in its Statement of Objects and Reasons that by and large minimum rates of wages have already been fixed for the vast majority of workers and therefore the main question now is not fixation of minimum wages but extension of the Schedule. But I would submit that as regards Schedule No. 2, the position is just the contrary. I would say that the majority of agricultural labour has not been covered by any minimum wage rate fixation so far. For instance, I will take a State like Uttar Pradesh, the biggest State in our country. So far as I know, in no part of U.P. is the minimum wage for agricultural labour being fixed under this Act. The same is the case in the majority of States. There may be one or two States where something has been done either on a State basis or in a particular region in a State but by and large it has not been implemented. So, instead of giving up the idea of having a time-limit for all the occupations concerned at least in respect of agricultural labour, who are the most down-trodden, and the most exploited and the most in need of protection—they had not even been properly organised associations or unions like the ones that workers have in respect of some industries, some serious attempt should be made to maintain the time-limit and try to make the State Governments fix those wage rates and enforce them. I do not know how the agricultural labour is going to be benefited under this Act, if even this is removed.

The second amendment, I am afraid, is to be opposed by us. I do not quarrel with the idea. If they want that if there is a tribunal or some sort of a wage fixation body like that already sitting or an award has been made and is in force regarding the wages to be paid, then the matter of fixing wages under this Act may be held up for the time being, it is a logical position which could be understood. But if one looks at the wording of this amendment,

I am afraid it has the most dangerous implications. It may defeat the very purpose of the Act itself. It says here:

> "Where in respect of an industrial dispute relating to the rates of wages payable to any of the employees employed in a scheduled employment, any proceeding is pending before a Tribunal.....or before any like authority under any other law for the time being in force....."

Do these words 'industrial dispute relating to the rates of wages payable' mean that the dispute relates to the quantum of the minimum? Not at all. The dispute relating to the rates of wages may mean anything. For instance, there may be a dispute, let us say, pending as to what should be the ratio of wages between male labour and female labour or female labour and child labour in some of the occupations—not the question of what the minimum should be. With the existing minimum mantained, a dispute may arise whether some category should get more or not, or whether in a particular place the wages which have been fixed earlier have been properly computed or not. There may be a dispute as to whether the rates of wages which have been fixed have been paid properly or there had been some mistake in calculating wages. There may also be, according to this amendment, a dispute before the payment of wages court. These are not disputes which necessarily bring into question the actual minimum calculated. Suppose there is a dispute of this type pending somewhere. Why should a bar be placed on people fixing or revising the minimum wage for that occupation? The dispute may not be on that point. It may be on some lesser point and it may be before the payment of wages court. In that amendment, it says further:

> ".....where such proceeding or award relates to the rates of wages payable to all the employees in the scheduled employment, no minimum rates of wages shall be fixed or revised in respect of that employment during the said period."

The same question arises. What is the meaning of a dispute relating to the rates of wages payable? If it relates to the minimum quantum, I could understand it. But the definition here and the wording here are so broad enough to allow any employer or any other authority to put obstacles. I suggest that this wording is anomalous. It leaves a lacuna here which means that any dispute can be interpreted as being relatable to the rates of wages payable—not necessarily the minimum. I do not know whether it is carelessly worded or there is some other intention behind it and I would like to have a clarification from the hon. Deputy Minister. When we are thinking of bringing in such a limited amendment, he should see that at least the wording is not such as to be open to different interpretations and lacunae are not allowed to creep in which would defeat the very purpose of this Act. An

amendment of this type can be valid only where the actual question is whether the minimum fixed should be raised or not. Where that issue is pending before a national tribunal or where an award is in force on that question, there, I quite understand the point; there is no good in a parallel and simultaneous process of any minimum wage committee coming into force. But that is not the clear meaning of this amendment at all.

We are also disappointed in the sense that there are no suggestions for any positive improvement in the working of this Act at all. My colleague, Shri Elias*, has given a number of examples and I do not want to multiply them by showing how in the daily working of this Act, many employers make a concerted attempt to bypass the provisions of this Act, not only in respect of the payment of the minimum wages fixed but also in respect of the other provisions like the proper maintenance of the records, registers, and so on and so forth. What is the deterrent for all that? Section 22 of the Act lays down the penalty for an employer who contravenes the provisions of this Act as being a fine not exceeding Rs. 500. I submit that if I were an employer I would seriously consider this question whether it is worthwhile to implement the wages laid down and go through all the trouble of making records and registers and so on or whether it is worthwhile to go on repeatedly contravening the provisions of the Act and taking the risk of each time paying a fine, at the most of Rs. 500. If I implement the provisions of the Act, it may cost a good bit more than Rs. 500. This is no deterrent. The trade unions have been agitating that the penalty and deterrent clauses of this Act which will act as some sort of a compulsion on the employers to abide by the provisions of the Act should be tightened up and made more rigorous. The penalties prescribed here are absolutely nominal and no employer is bothered about them at all. He can easily afford to pay the fine rather than pay the minimum wages. Unfortunately, no amendment to improve this position has been brought forward.

Then there is the most basic question of all. I had the opportunity to serve for quite a long time on one of these minimum wage fixation committees which was dealing with the Central Government undertakings. It was my experience in the working of that committee that the most frustrating thing that one can come up against is the deadlock on the method or basis or the lack of basis for actual fixation of the minimum wages. Machinery is provided no doubt under the Act. To that extent we welcome it. But the point is whether we have or we have not reached a new stage? This Act is now 12-13 years old. Surely with the all-round progress that is being made in the concept of the working class standards and labour relations and all that, is it not time for the Government to consider seriously that we have come to

* Referring to Shri Muhammed Elias, MP.

a stage now where some sort of broad principles or basis or directives at least should be incorporated in the Act to assist these wage fixation committees in their work? I can tell you from my own experience what is happening. In the committee, how do we set about the fixation of the minimum wage? There was no principle or basis. The only thing was to find out what the local market rate of labour was. That means to say labour is considered a commodity like cloth, food, sugar or rice that is being sold in the market. There is this huge pool of unemployed people in our country unfortunately and they are selling their labour power in the market. So, we were to find out from the demand and supply position as to what is the prevailing market rate and what is the cheapest rate at which you can get this particular category of labour and then fix the rate, as the minimum rate. I am referring to these unskilled, sweated type of occupations; because after all, under Schedule I, some occupations come in under that definition which cannot be called sweated, since there are people who are much more highly paid and the Act was not originally made for their protection. I am only talking of the people whom we are seeking to protect. So, the result is, that you will find that in most of these occupations, the wages are generally fixed more or less at a standard level at 12 *annas* for women or at Re. 1 or Rs. 1.25 per day, all inclusive, and it never goes above that. It cannot, because there is no guiding directive or principle.

Therefore, I feel that these revised rates are also starvation wages. In what sense are they minimum wages? I think that since this Act was passed in 1948, we have gone quite a long way, and the Deputy Minister knows it very well. In the consideration of this question we have got before us a newly agreed tripartite decision concerning what we consider to be a desirable minimum wage, the need based norm, for minimum wages. That was not there in 1948, but by the time another decade had passed the Government employees and labour did advance forward to a stage where we thought it necessary at the 15th Indian Labour Conference to calculate some sort of broad norm so that a worker and his family and dependants in the course of a month may get what they require—these minimum commodities to keep themselves alive—so much of foodgrains, so much of cloth, so much of floor space, namely, housing so much of other things, etc. It should be need-based. If you give him less than this, it is not possible for him to keep alive.

I am not suggesting here that some legislation should be brought to the effect that in all these occupations which have come under the Minimum Wages Act, that norm of the 15th Labour Conference should be mechanically applied; that after it is worked out in its cash equivalent, it should be made binding, by law, on the employers. I am not saying that, because we have seen that that norm suggested by the 15th Indian Labour Conference works out at varying figures, ranging from Rs. 125 to Rs. 175 a month. Let alone

these types of scattered, sweated industries; there are even well-established, large-scale, organised industries whose employers, night and day, are crying that it is impossible for them even to pay the minimum norm arrived at, at the 15th Indian Labour Conference. Even an industry like the cotton textile industry says that it is not able to afford to pay that much. And certainly, a small beedi employer or a small employer of some other small concern like that cannot be asked tomorrow to pay his workers Rs. 125 or Rs. 150 per mensem. But what I am saying is that we have come to a stage where some sort of directive principles or goal or ideal which we aim at should at least be brought before the minimum wage fixation bodies. If the resolution passed at the 15th Indian Labour Conference is again studied by the Ministry, it will be seen that there was a recommendation to the effect that this agreed norm should be forwarded as a recommendation or a directive or a guiding principle to all tribunals and wage fixation bodies and similar bodies in the country which are concerned with this type of work, to guide them.

My experience in the minimum wage fixation committee is this. Our deliberations and discussions have no relation whatsoever to any such minimum, need-based, norm. The question of necessity of the workers is never taken into consideration. It is only a question of labour demand and supply in the labour market and the cheapest available rate at which it is possible to get an unemployed man to do the work. There are also anomalies coming in. That particular committee of mine was dealing with the Central Government undertakings. Sometimes when we were thinking of fixing a particular figure as the minimum wage, objections, came from the State Governments saying that if within the boundaries of the same State the workers employed in the Central Government undertakings are paid Rs. 1.50 while the State Government, in similar undertakings pays only Rs. 1.25, then all the workers will go away to the Central Government undertakings and they would not be able to get any worker. On these objections from the State Governments, the committee was again more or less forced by pressure of circumstances to revise its earlier decision or recommendation and reduce the rate from Rs. 1.60 to Rs. 1.40. So, the determining factors have got nothing to do, at present, with the actual concept of a minimum wage as a conception, as a norm, satisfying the workers' bare physical necessities. I would therefore say that the biggest weakness of this minimum wage legislation is that there is no machinery which has been set up....

*** *** ***

The capacity of the worker to work without a certain minimum need-based norm is never taken into consideration. That is my whole point and that is my objection. Now that we have reached a stage where there has been an agreed decision about what the minimum need-based norm should be at

least in terms of commodities like foodgrains and also housing, etc., for the purposes of these industries in Schedule No. 1 and 2 let the Government come forward and work out some norm. Let it at least be a lower norm. Why can't they fix a lower norm if the norm is too high for these people? Let it be a bit lower than what is recommended at the 15th Indian Labour Conference. But let there be a norm which should act as a guide or directive for these bodies. The purpose of the minimum wage legislation is not simply to set up a chain of wage fixation and wage revising bodies and to leave it entirely to the gentlemen who are there to be guided by any factors which they may choose to be guided by.

*** *** ***

There are no general principles except the law of supply and demand. When the purpose of the Act is to afford protection to those sections which are the most in need of protection, which are not organised, which are sweated and exploited, and if we want a really progressive type of legislation, that gap might be filled up and some sort of an agreed norm and directive principle must be embodied in the Minimum Wages Act. Otherwise no purpose will be served and we would not be able to afford any real protection. Even this limited thing is being by passed by the employers because they know they can get away with a fine of Rs. 500; so they think why should they pay more to the workers.

These, Sir, are my submissions. As far as the amendments are concerned, I would just like to repeat my suggestion. In respect of the first amendment, I would suggest that the time-limit should be maintained at least in respect of agricultural labour, which is the occupation under Schedule II. The Statement of Objects and Reasons says that they are withdrawing the time-limit because the bulk of the occupations have already been covered by the minimum wages. But that certainly does not apply to the agricultural labour. In this case the time-limit should be maintainted and the Government should make every effort to see that it is enforced.

As far as the second amendment is concerned, I would request the Minister to see that careful thought is devoted to the wording of the amendment and that it does not provide loopholes whereby any footling thing which an employer may raise or may get referred to a tribunal or a court may hold up indefinitely the whole machinery of fixation and revision of minimum rates of wages. That would defeat the very purpose of the amendment which the Government seek to make.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move:

> "That the Bill further to amend the Insurance Act, 1938 be taken into consideration."

My object in moving this Bill is really three-fold. It seeks to remove the lacuna in the Act; it also seeks to remove a social injustice which has been done through this Act to the salaried employees of the general insurance companies and it also seeks to remove a legal disability under which they are suffering as a result of this Act, that is, regarding their right as workmen to raise a specific form of industrial dispute before an industrial tribunal as is provided for in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

With your permission, Sir, I would just like to give a little background of this matter as it appears to me. Section 31A of the Insurance (Amendment) Act was inserted therein by an amending Bill of 1950. The parent Act itself dates from 1938, that is, the pre-Independence days, and the amending Bill later became Act XLVII of 1950 which introduced the New Section 31A of this Act. By this section 31A, a provision has been inserted that a general insurance company referred to in the Act as the 'insurer' can provide for the payment of bonus—I am quoting from the Act from section 31A (c), proviso (vii)—

> "The payment of bonus in any year on a uniform basis to all salaried employees or any class of them by way of additional remuneration, such bonus, in the case of any employee, not exceeding in amount the equivalent of his salary for a period which, in the opinion of the Central Government, is reasonable having regard to the circumstances of the case."

Provision was made here that any General Insurance company which wished to pay bonus in any particular year to its salaried employees would have to apply to the Central Government for its approval, both as to the question whether any bonus should be paid or not and also as to the quantum of that bonus. That is the hub of the whole matter. I may point out that, despite this provision in the Act which was introduced in 1950, an

---

* Moving the Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 1963 (Amendment of sections 31A and 40C of the Insurance Act, 1938); *L.S. Deb.*, 19 April 1963 and 3 May 1963.

overwhelming majority of these Insurance companies continued thereafter to pay bonus every year to their employees in the normal course of things. They used to have negotiations with their employees or their employees' associations and bonus agreements were entered into. That can be cited; so many examples are there. Even after the insertion of this section 31A, I would like to point out, on 20 November 1952, that is practically two years after section 31A came into force, a Circular was issued by the then Controller of Insurance, Shri A. Rajagopalan—I have got a copy of that circular here—addressed to all insurers carrying on insurance business in India. In this circular, it is stated,—with your permission, I would just read a portion out of it.

> "It has been found that every year several insurers solicit the opinion of the Central Government under proviso (vii) to sub-section (1) of section 31A of the Insurance Act 1938, regarding payment of bonus to their staff, in order to make sure that the Government does not consider it excessive. I am, therefore, to give the following indications on the subject, so as to minimise references in this connection. It is the responsibility of each insurer to decide the rate of bonus that he can afford to pay his staff keeping in view the provisions of sections 40B and 40C of the Insurance Act...
>
> No Insurer whose life insurance fund is in deficit and who has not made any profits in the preceding year in general insurance business as a whole should pay any bonus to its staff."

Having given this direction, the Controller of Insurance goes on to say in the Circular:

> "Subject to these considerations,
>
> (i) The Central Government will not consider any bonus up to 2 months salary as unreasonable.
>
> (ii) If any higher bonus had been paid by such an insurer in the previous year, then, he may pay bonus at the same rate for the current year, if he thinks fit, without consulting the Central Government.
>
> Sd/-
> Yours faithfully,
>
> A. Rajagopalan.
> Controller of Insurance."

This circular was issued to all general insurers carrying on insurance business almost two years after the coming into operation of section 31A which shows how the mind of the Government was working: in order to minimise references, in order to give a general directive that subject to the profitability of the concern, they might without consulting the Central Government go up to the extent of two months' salary as bonus for payment to the staff. This shows that the Government was taking a fairly liberal and practical view of the whole question.

Trouble began when this particular case of the Hercules Insurance came up before the Supreme Court. The reference to a tribunal had been made by the Central Government itself. A bonus dispute of the employees of the Hercules Insurance was referred by the Central Government to the Industrial Tribunal at Dhanbad to adjudicate the appellant's claim for bonus for the years 1954-55. This was challenged by the company on the ground of section 31A. They claimed that such a reference itself was bad and could not come before the Industrial Tribunal, because section 31A makes it imperative on any company to take the prior sanction of the Central Government, executive sanction of the Central Government for paying bonus and also for deciding the quantum of bonus and that, therefore, this was not a field in which the Industrial Tribunal could intervene and give a judgment. This view was contested, of course, before the hon. Supreme Court on behalf of the employees. I may just state it briefly, summarising the arguments that were put forward. It was argued that this proviso (vii) of section 31A is really a proviso which merely enables the Government to prescribe a maximum quantum of bonus. That is really the intention of that proviso. This was one argument.

Another argument used was that this proviso does not take away the Government's authority to refer the bonus dispute to a tribunal. It may enjoin upon it to prescribe the maximum but it does not take away its authority to refer a bonus dispute, if it so wishes, to an industrial tribunal.

The third argument used was that in a particular case Government may hold that payment of bonus is justifiable in general, but the Government itself may wish that the actual quantum should be decided by an Industrial Tribunal. Subject to general approval, it might even conceivably in a particular case refer the matter to a tribunal to go into the details of the position of a particular company and fix the quantum.

The fourth argument used was that in a particular case Government may decide that bonus is payable and should be paid and may even decide on the quantum, but the insurer concerned may refuse to pay; in such a case, the only remedy open would be to refer that case to a tribunal and get a binding decision of a judicial character on that.

However, despite these arguments, because of the lacuna in the parent Act itself, the Supreme Court dismissed the arguments on behalf of the employees and upheld the appeal of the company and the matter was dismissed.

The basis for my amending Bill arises from the repercussions that this judgment now has had. The effect of this judgment has been that although prior to the judgment, in spite of the fact that the Act was in force no complications and difficulties had arisen and the companies had in the normal course been negotiating with their employees and paying them bonuses, and although, as I have just stated a little earlier, the mind of the Government of India which was expressed in the circular of the Controller of Insurance himself showed that they were not averse to companies paying bonus even up to the extent of two months' salary per year, yet, after this judgment of the Supreme Court has been delivered, I believe, on 7 December, 1960, immediately after this, we find a marked change in the attitude of these general insurance companies towards their employees' claims for bonus. And subsequently, it was found that even companies which had been negotiating with their employees and had come to bonus settlements year after year, began to refuse to sign any type of bonus agreement, and in fact, the non-payment of bonus has now in many companies become almost a form of punishment of the employees, and constant harassment of employees is carried on, on this basis and this judgment is cited every time.

The other aspect which I wish to bring to the notice of the Government is this that the employees of these General Insurance Companies are workmen within the meaning of the Industrial Disputes Act of 1947. The Industrial Disputes Act defines 'an industrial dispute' in section 2(K) as follows:

> " 'industrial dispute' means any dispute or difference between employers and employees, or between employers and workmen or between workmen and workmen, which is connected with the employment or non-employment or the terms of employment or the conditions of labour of any person.".

And obviously, the issue of bonus comes within the scope of the Industrial Disputes Act. The Third Schedule to the Industrial Disputes Act is entitled 'Matters within the jurisdiction of Industrial Tribunals'. Item 5 of this Third Schedule, specifically mentions the question of bonus, and relates to bonus, profit-sharing, provident fund and gratuity. That means that under the Industrial Disputes Act, it is laid down that those who are qualified as workmen under this Act, have the right to raise an industrial dispute connected with the question of bonus, before an Industrial Tribunal, under the Third Schedule to that Act.

In fact, I may also point out that in this very Judgment of the Supreme Court, in the case of the Hercules Insurance, the Supreme Court itself observed as follows, and I may quote from the judgment.

> "Bonus under the Industrial Disputes Act is not a part of wages. But the right to claim bonus which has been universally recognised by industrial adjudication in cases of employment falling under the said Act has now attained the status of a legal right."

This is stated by the Supreme Court in this very judgment. A peculiar position has now been reached which is an anomaly or a lacuna or anything you may call it where these employees, who are certainly workmen under the Industrial Disputes Act are now being denied their legal right under the Act because of the fact that this section of the Insurance Act has been interpreted by the Supreme Court to mean that they have no right to go at all in reference to the Industrial tribunal.

This question has now created a sort of separate class, as it were, as far as these General Insurance workmen are concerned, and they have been agitating on this question for quite a long time, making several representations to the Government, urging upon them that a suitable amendment should be made to the Act, so that they are not debarred from the right of agitating the question of bonus, if necessary, before an Industrial Tribunal. I find that on 14 December 1961, the General Insurance Employees' Association was written to by an officer of the Ministry of Labour and Employment in which he says:

> "I am directed to say that as the question of the amendment of the Insurance Act in the light of the judgment of the Supreme Court is being considered, it will necessarily take some time for a final decision to be taken."

It seems quite clear that even as long ago as December 1961, the Government had under its consideration the question of making a suitable amendment to the Act. Since then, quite a long time has passed by, but we have heard no more about this amendment.

Therefore, I have brought this Bill forward. I think the hon. Minister will agree that the only question which is at stake here is whether there is an adequate safeguard or not to see that a particular General Insurance Company whose financial position may not be sound, is not compelled to pay a bonus which it may not be able to bear. My reply to that would be that, that is the very purpose for which the Industrial Tribunal is constituted. It is for the General Insurance Company to satisfy the Industrial Tribunal, which is a judicial body, that it is not in a position to bear the burden of bonus in a particular year for its employees, and it is for the Tribunal to go into the

merits of the question and decide. There is no justification from any point of view for this matter to be excluded from the purview of a judicial body like a Tribunal and to be left entirely at the discretion of the executive which is what is the effect in fact of section 31A. Therefore, I am proposing my two amendments which are simple. I am sure the hon. Minister has paid some attention to them. My first amendment reads:

> "In sub-section (1) of section 31A of the Insurance Act.....in item (vii) of the proviso to clause (c), the following words shall be omitted, namely:—
>
> 'such bonus, in the case of any employee, not exceeding in amount the equivalent of his salary for a period which, in the opinion of the Central Government, is reasonable having regard to the circumstances of the case'."

After this omission, the proviso would read as follows:

> "Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall prohibit the payment of bonus in any year on a uniform basis to all salaried employees or any class of them by way of additional remuneration...."

So that a general provision is there that the payment of bonus is not ruled out. Whether in a particular year in the case of a particular concern a particular quantum of bonus is actually justified or not is a matter which should be left in the normal course to decision by a judicial tribunal, in this case by the Industrial Tribunal.

My second amendment is to section 40C which imposes some limitations on the expenses of management in the General Insurance business. I wish to make an addition to sub-section (1) of the section. I will just read the section as it is, and then the proposed addition. The section reads:

> ".....Provided that where an insurer has spent as such expenses in any year an amount in excess of the amount permissible under this sub-section, he shall not be deemed to have contravened the provisions of this section, if the excess amount so spent is within such limits as may be fixed in respect of the year by the Controller after consultation with the Executive Committee of the General Insurance Council.....by which the actual expenses incurred may exceed the expenses permissible under this sub-section."

I wish to add the following:

> "as well as the liability of the insurer to pay remuneration including bonus, amounting to living wages, to his workmen, as defined by the Industrial Disputes, Act, 1947."

These are my amendments. I hope the Minister will consider them sympathetically, because it seems the matter has been under consideration for almost two years now, and I think it is high time we removed the injustice which has been unwittingly perpetuated perhaps due to this lacuna on one category of employees out of the whole body of workers in India who are debarred for no fault of theirs from pressing their claims before an Industrial Tribunal. This restriction should be removed, and they should be brought in line with the rest of the workmen in the country.

*Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister has really, if I may say so, begged the question. The Government is seized of the fact, I know. Because, I have quoted the other day from correspondence which shows that the matter has been under consideration for 2 or 3 years. The Employees unions were informed in writing that the matter was being considered. I was looking forward and anticipating that perhaps today, we would get some inkling how far the Government's consideration has gone in that matter. But, we are up against a blank wall. The point is not that we want to take away entirely the discretion of the Government. Not at all. The point is also not that the Tribunal would not have any competence or power to go into the financial position of a particular insurer. Also, there is nothing to prevent the Government appearing before the Tribunal and making its position clear regarding its view of a particular insurance company. But, the point is that, despite any attitude which the Government might take, in practice, the insurance companies, taking advantage of this lacuna in the Act, have begun, since the Supreme Court Judgment, to turn down the demand of the employees, who are left with no legal remedy, and are not able to avail themselves of the remedy which is open to other industrial workmen under the Industrial Disputes Act.

What I want to ask the Government is to say whether they recognise this anomaly, this lacuna or not, whether they will take any steps to remove this. I would remind the hon. Minister that a similar case took place with the banks under section 10 of the Banking Companies Act. In the Central Bank case, a similar position arose. By that section of the Banking Companies Act, the bank employees were not able to plead the case of bonus. The hon. Supreme Court had pointed that out. Subsequently, the Government came forward with an amendment and amended that section 10 of the Banking Companies Act removing that bar, so that there is no obstacle now in the path of banking employees to agitate the matter of bonus before the Tribunal. Why should this discrimination be practised only against employees of General Insurance Companies?

*** *** ***

* *L.S. Deb.*, 3 May 1963.

What I want to know from the Minister is this. What happens to my Bill is not the main thing. He has said, let us await the report of the Bonus Commission. I am saying that this Bonus Commission may not be able to give any specific direction with regard to General Insurance Companies. That is not a term of reference, I know. Therefore, I would like to know whether he is prepared to give even this much assurance on the floor of the House that the Government is seriously considering bringing forward some suitable amendment which will remove this hardship which the employees are likely to suffer from in this case, where a particular insurance company takes it into its head to utilise this lacuna in order to deprive them of their legitimate bonus. If he gives this assurance, I am prepared, for the time being, to withdraw my Bill. Let him tell us that the Government are actively considering it, and will bring forward a suitable measure. Otherwise, I am not going to withdraw it.

*** *** ***

Since the intention of the Government, as the Deputy Minister himself admits, was something else, but that intention has not been realised. Is he prepared to rectify this position by an early amendment?

*** *** ***

In view of what the hon. Minister has stated, I hold him to this, and I take this as an assurance that Government are actively considering the question of rectifying this anomaly. In the face of this which I take as an assurance. I beg leave to withdraw the Bill.*

---

* In response to Shri B.R. Bhagat, the then Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Finance.

The Bill contains both good and bad in it, rather more bad than good, I am afraid. One reason for this is that the Labour Ministry has always followed a policy of making a sort of *ad hoc* and piecemeal amendments to the Industrial Disputes Act instead of any comprehensive amendment in the light of the discussions which take place from time to time in the tripartite conference and tripartite standing committees. Therefore, from time to time they come forward with minor amendments relating to a particular section or part of the section which leaves many other problems undecided and creates sometimes new complications and problems. What is there good in this which could be supported straightaway? First of all, there is an amendment to section 2, which I certainly welcome, which has extended the coverage of this Act to the employees of the Indian Airlines and the Air India Corporation. But here again they have gone one inch forward and then stopped. I would like to ask them, if the object of this Act is to bring about harmony and industrial peace in as wide an area as possible, why are they not a little more bold in the coverage that is proposed under this Bill? For example, there are so many types of employees who are excluded from coverage under this Act on the technical ground that they are not workmen. I can give one or two examples. There are the employees of hospitals. Here is a case where it is particularly necessary to take steps to see that any genuine grievances that might be there are speedily remedied and that no kind of dislocation takes place. Nobody wants dislocation in a hospital; nobody can say that because it is a hospital, therefore, the employees there may not have any genuine grievances. Certainly they may have and certainly if some machinery is available to them for peaceful settlement of those disputes, it is very much in the interests of everybody, including the public. But strangely enough, this particular category of employees are excluded from the application of this Act on the ground that they do not come within the existing definition of workmen under this Act. Therefore, what are we left with? Hospital employees in the country have a genuine grievance, but they cannot find a remedy under the procedure of conciliation, arbitration or adjudication under this Act. Therefore, with all the goodwill in the world, you cannot prevent every now and then some dislocation or some strike or some stoppage of work taking place in hospitals. That is most undesirable. But there is no remedy

* Participating in the discussion on the Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 1963; *L.S. Deb.*, 11 November 1965.

left open to them. Here, when they decide that section 2 should be amended, why do they put in only the Air India and the Indian Airlines Corporations, I cannot understand. They know very well; they know the history of these disputes in the hospitals. In the educational institutions, there are those employees of the universities, teachers and so on, and other employees also. The same position exists there. They may have some genuine demands and grievances; why should the machinery of this Act not be available to them also, so that there can be a speedy and expeditious and peaceful settlement of these disputes, instead of driving them to a point where they may resort to some sort of direct action. So, while I welcome this amendment, as far as it goes, to section 2, it is really very shortsighted and very incomplete. I hope the Minister will come forward in the not too distant future with a more comprehensive amendment to section 2 which will also involve, of course, changing or modifying the definition of workman under this Act so that these other sections could also be brought within its ambit.

Then there is the insertion of a new section—section 2A—which I also welcome and support as far as it goes. As a matter of fact, if my memory does not fail me, several years ago this position did exist, which has been restored now by the insertion of this section, namely, that an individual workman, even if he is not represented by a trade union or even if his case is not taken up by a number of other workmen acting collectively, he was in a position to agitate his individual case before a machinery of conciliation and adjudication. But subsequently, at a certain stage—I have forgotten the exact date—that position was removed from the legislation. It has now been partially restored. I welcome, it because this is really a recognition of the fact that in our country, a very-very large number of workmen are still unorganised. They do not belong to any union. This may be a sad commentary on the state of the trade union movement, but there is no point in not facing the realities; and despite all the claims of membership that are made by the various trade union organisations, I am sorry to say that perhaps almost 50 per cent of all the workers in this country are probably unorganised even today. Even in an organisation like the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, the membership which it claims officially,—I think Shri Priya Gupta will correct me if I am wrong—even its claimed membership, is not even half of the total number of railway workers. So, it was only natural that a workman who is wrongfully discharged or feels he is wrongfully discharged or dismissed or retrenched or his services have been terminated, when he has no union to go to or there is no union which represents him, or he does not feel like being represented by any union, should nevertheless not be deprived of the natural justice which is provided to him now by this amendment and which enables him to take his case up to a conciliator or to an adjudicator. So, I welcome this certainly, but here too, I must say that that the same mentality of going so far and no further has also dominated this new section 2A.

When it is conceded here that the individual workman should be given this facility and right, why is it again curbed and circumscribed and is only restricted to cases of discharge, dismissal, retrenchment and termination of services? It is good as far as it goes, but what about a case where the employer wrongfully suspends somebody or, let us say, demotes him, or in some other way, adversely affects his conditions of service even short of dismissal or retrenchment? As we know, in this country, the state of industrial relations is such even now that a huge number of instances of deliberate victimisation of workers takes place all the time. There is a large body of employers in this country who have not reconciled themselves yet to the very existence of the trade union movement and whose one concern for 24 hours of the day is how to break a union, how to disrupt a union, how to intimidate the leading workers of a union, how to create division inside the union, and for that purpose, all manner of harassment and victimisation also goes on, which may come in the form of suspension; sometimes indefinite suspension and sometimes the people are demoted. Sometimes, various other forms of harassment of this type take place. Sometimes, they are transferred arbitrarily from one place to another, so that the office bearer of a union can no longer function normally. This goes on in the railways the whole time; they are transferred from one place to another place 500 miles away.

So, the point is that, here, I feel that this section should be enlarged to cover not only discharge, dismissal, retrenchment and termination of services, but also the cases of victimisation, those cases of alleged victimisation which can be established as unfair labour practice as motivated solely by the desire to penalise a worker or intimidate a worker. Such cases should also be covered by this section, because we must remember one thing, namely, when an individual worker feels he has been wronged, and wants to take advantage of this machinery—of course in the eyes of the law he is put on the same footing now as a worker who comes through a union—in actual practice, we find and we will find, I am quite sure, the machinery being what it is, that the cases of these individual workmen are likely to be neglected. They will remain there, lying there for months and weeks together and nobody bothers about them; whereas, if a union or some other body of workmen represents that worker's case, they are likely to be able to get a much better hearing. The individual workman's case is liable to go by default, and in respect of these conciliation officers, labour officers and so on with whom we generally have to deal in all our States, already we find that cases are lying there in the files for weeks and months together. But where it becomes a question of choosing between the case of an individual worker and a case brought by a union, there is every danger and likelihood of those individual cases lying buried under the files for a long time to come. Therefore, the Ministry should also consider the question of strengthening the machinery of conciliation and

adjudication. The conciliation officers themselves tell us sometimes: in some cases, they are hopelessly under-staffed; they say they cannot cope with the huge number of cases that come up to them; the State Labour Departments also complain about it; in some cases I think these complaints are justified and in some cases they may not be, but this machinery must be strengthened by the appointment of more conciliation officers, industrial courts, tribunals and so on and enough resources should be put at the disposal of these bodies to deal with the cases. Although some benefit is being conferred here, through this section, on individual workers, in actual practice, the workers may find that these cases are not taken up for months and years together.

Then, in regard to the amendment to section 29 of the Act, my support to it can only be a mixed one, because something is given with one hand and then taken away with the other. What is given with the first hand, I support. It is nothing revolutionary; it simply says that if an employer continues to commit breach of the provisions of the Act, then for each continuing breach, he will be fined Rs. 200 for every day during which the breach continues. It is very good; up to now the penalty which was there in the Act was absolutely ridiculous and no employer ever bothered about it. So, this penalty, for a continuing breach, of Rs. 200 as fine for every day is certainly a good thing and it would act as some form of a deterrent, but what is given by one hand is taken away with the other in the concluding clause of the Bill which says, "Rs. 200 for every day during which the breach continues after the conviction for the first." That means for the original sin of committing the first breach, he must have been prosecuted and convicted, and only after he has been convicted, thereafter, for any subsequent breach he will be fined Rs. 200 per day. That means, the pre-condition of this continuing penalty is that he should at least for the first breach have been prosecuted and convicted. Who can prosecute and convict the employer? The prosecution can only be launched under this Act for any breach, by the Government itself. The workmen who are the sufferers cannot *suo moto* of their own accord, start any kind of case against their employer. Only the Government on its own initiative can prosecute. But our experience shows that such prosecutions are few and far between. The labour departments are most reluctant ever to launch prosecution. Therefore this pharse "after the conviction for the first" would nullify to a great extent the benefit which is sought to be given here.

I am opposed to the provision seeking to substitute a new section for section 25 'C' "Right of workmen laid off for compensation". I know incentives are supposed to be given to workers for production and so on. But here a direct incentive is being given to the employer to use any kind of dubious method in order to compel a worker by hook or by crook to enter into an agreement with the employer to the effect that, "if I am laid off by you, you have to pay the compensation only for 45 days; from the 46th day onwards,

you need not pay me any compensation, even if you keep me laid off for another six months". This is the meaning of the second para which says, "if there is an agreement to that effect between the workman and the employer, no such compensation shall be payable after the expiry of the first 45 days." In our country in so many industries, we find—the Minister who is connected with the mining industry also knows—that there are numerous sections of backward workers who are illiterate. Even now when they receive their monthly wages, they cannot sign their names on the receipts they merely put their thumb impressions. This is happening in the plantations, jute mills and mining areas. It is very easy for the employer by subterfuge and deceit to force a workman to sign some statement which will amount to his saying, "if I am laid off, beyond 45 days, you need not pay the compensation after the 45th day". This is the incentive offered to the employer here.

In our country unemployment is on a prolific scale and there is no worse fate in society for a man with a family than to be unemployed. Suppose an unemployed man is offered a job in a factory. The employer says, "I will give you the job as a temporary or *badli* worker; but first you must sign this agreement. Otherwise, you would not get the job." Willy-nilly, he will sign it to get some means of livelihood for a few days. And he will sign away his right of compensation for lay-off beyond 45 days. This is a very dangerous clause which should be deleted.

In the same section, there is this provision that "any compensation paid to the workman for having been laid off during the preceding twelve months may be set off against the compensation payable for retrenchment". That is to say, if I have been laid off for a period of 45 days and after that the employer says he is going to retrench me, the statutory compensation which is payable to me will be made minus the amount that has been paid to me already as lay-off compensation. This is, in my opinion, a most iniquitious provision. Retrenchment compensation is paid for the purpose of that man being able to rehabilitate himself after he is retrenched. He may start a *pan* or *biri* shop to keep himself alive; whereas compensation for lay-off—50 per cent of the total wages—is paid to him for the actual days that he has been refused employment by the employer. Wherever he may be living, he has to go to the closed factory every day and sign his attendance there. Otherwise, he is not paid lay-off compensation. Now it is said here that after I am retrenched altogether, the money that I got during the lay-off period will also be deducted from my retrenchment compensation. This is a niggardly, miserly outlook and this provision should also be deleted.

A word about the *badli* workers. The Bill says, any *badli* worker who has completed one year's employment, will be entitled to lay-off compensation. My experience of 25 years in the jute industry is, no *badli* worker will ever

complete one year. It is defined in another place that any *badli* worker who has put in 240 days work in a calendar year is considered to have put in one year's work. I have appeared before many jute industrial tribunals and I was a member of the wage board. I have found that hardly 5 to 10 per cent of the registered *badliwalas* are very permitted by the management to complete 240 days' work in a calendar year and they are never allowed to become permanent in that sense of the term. So, this clause will defeat its own purpose. What should be there is that any registered *badli* worker whose name is maintained on the rolls of the company for a full year should be paid compensation if he is at any time laid off. It should be enough if his name has been carried in the rolls for one year, even though he might have worked only intermittently. In that case, he must be eligible to get this compensation.

Sir, this is a small Bill, but I am afraid it has got so many points in it which are complicated. I would request the Ministry to give a little thought to this matter and not keep resorting to this sort of piecemeal amendments every now and then. If a fresh problem is created after two months, they will again bring in a little bit of amendment, not one inch further. Therefore, there is very limited benefit registered in this Bill to the workmen and I would request the Minister to accept at least the amendments which we have tabled.

Sir, although this Bill is going to be passed anyway and a minimum bonus of 8.33 per cent is assured, I have to oppose the main principles underlining this piece of legislation, which I consider to be extremely vicious. For whom is this minimum bonus? Since this intended bonus is irrespective of profit or loss, it means that it is designed for those people who either did not enjoy any bonus or who for the last eight years have been kept pegged down to the previous minimum, namely, four per cent. They are the only gainers from it; nobody else. The Minister knows very well that the bulk of the workers in the organised sector of industry, engineering, textiles, pharmaceuticals, etc., whether by agreement or by other means, have been enjoying well above 8-1/3 per cent, 10, 15 or 18 per cent. They are not going to gain anything out of this; we do not want it also, because they can look after themselves. The whole object was to bring a larger number of people within the ambit of the benefit of a minimum bonus, which they will get, irrespective of profit and loss. As far as workers of unorganised industries, small-scale industries or sweated industries are concerned, certainly it is a gain for them.

But a point which has been repeatedly made is that there are lakhs and lakhs of government employees who have never got any bonus, because they have been outside the ambit of the provisions for even a minimum bonus. It is for that reason that we were so much agitated at that time. This time also after the passage of this Bill, the minimum bonus is sought to be withheld even from those Central Government employees who are industrial employees in the ordnance factories, who are making automatic rifles. They are not to get it because they happen to be departmental employees. Similarly, railway employees who make coaches and engines are kept out of it. Is this the way in which Shri Khadilkar** proposes to ensure industrial peace in the country? Will it not aggravate the discontent? So, my first point is that this principle is vicious. This is not a thing which applies to anybody except to those in the bottom-most rung of the ladder, who were not getting any bonus. So far as the Central Government and State Government employees are concerned, it

*Participating in the discussion on the Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Bill, 1964; *L.S. Deb.*, 5 December 1972.

**Referring to Shri R.K. Khadilkar, the then Minister of Labour and Rehabilitation.

will not apply to them. Therefore, we oppose it. We want its coverage to be extended to government employees also.

Secondly, though it is not laid down in the Bill, it is implied that any amount of bonus for which a worker may be eligible over and above 8-1/3 per cent will not be paid in cash but it will be credited to the Provident Fund account. What is the theory behind this provision? The theory behind it is—he has not spelt it out in so many words—but it is stated in so many statements by Ministers and other so-called eminent economists in various seminars and meetings, that the working class has got so much money in its hands so much liquid money in its hands that, that is the primary cause for the rise in prices and inflation in this country and therefore, if we want to fight price rise and inflation, you must prevent the workers from getting so much cash. So, when it comes to a new bonus law, this provision is made that, if instead of 8.33 per cent you are entitled to, say, 10 per cent bonus, according to the formula you will not get 10 per cent in cash but you will get 8.33 per cent and the balance of 1-2/3 per cent will go into the Provident Fund account and you will not be able to enjoy it.

This is a vicious theory, a capitalist theory out and out, a hundred per cent capitalist theory, that workers today are responsible for inflation in this country. This is a theory which is meant to white-wash the sins of all those people who in collusion with certain people in the Government are carrying out profiteering, speculation, hoarding of commodities, racketeering in the market and putting up prices. Instead of attacking them and taking firm measures against them, here, in the name of, so-called savings, the workers' bonus is to be taken away from him and put in the freeze, in the Provident Fund account, in the name of fighting inflation. We will never accept it. You may pass it. But the working class will continue to fight against it.

Thirdly, I would like Shri Khadilkar to ponder this that as far as those workers are concerned who are eligible to get more than 8.33 per cent bonus, according to the formula, but who now will know that extra amount will not be given to them in cash, what will it mean? It will only mean that you are indirectly—you may not have that intention but the effect will be that—encouraging those workers who have got the organisation and the strength in their unions to compel the employers, when they make an agreement every year, to write 8.33 per cent as bonus and the remaining 8 per cent or 10 per cent as *ex gratia* payment, and they will get it in cash and nothing will go into the Provident Fund account. That is what we are doing. We have already begun doing it, for your information, where we have strength and the employer also rather than risking a big disturbance is forced to come to terms.

What is the use of this provision then? So many agreements we have signed this year for 15 per cent, for 16 per cent and even for 20 per cent, where it is written in the agreement that 8.33 per cent is bonus and the rest of it is, *ex gratia* payment, and the whole of it he gets in cash. So, he is happy. Where have your provisions of law gone to? This is neither honest nor does it amount to promoting industrial peace. It is only a means whereby you are penalising the workers for the sins of other people who have created inflation and pushed up prices in the market.

So, on these principles, we are totally opposed to it and, I hope, the Government will reconsider the whole matter when it comes forward with a more comprehensive Bill and correct these loopholes.

THE INDUSTRIAL (DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION) AMENDMENT BILL, 1971*

This Bill seeks to give statutory form to the Ordinance. At first sight it appeared to be a really progressive measure and we were inclined to welcome it and support it but on closer scrutiny of the provisions of the Bill and the earlier Ordinance, it became clear that under the guise of a progressive measure actually certain very retrograde things are being imported into this. Therefore, it is not possible for us to give any sort of blanket or unconditional support to this measure as it stands, unless it is amended in certain vital aspects.

The statement which the Minister has made explaining the circumstances which necessitated the promulgation of this Ordinance, very correctly lays stress repeatedly on two or three different aspects, disquieting aspects, undesirable aspects, of the feature of mass closures, large-scale closures, of factories and units which have been taking place in our country for a considerable time. The factors which he has emhasized, and with which I agree, are not only the loss in production which the country has to suffer, but also the question of unemployment, the fact that a large number of workers running into lakhs were being thrown out on the street and that this unemployment problem, if allowed to continue in this way, would also in its turn lead to law and order situation. He has mentioned all these facts in his statement. He has even drawn particular attention to the condition of the industrial climate in West Bengal and he has taken pains to give the number of factories which were affected and the number of workers who have been thrown out. Three or four times in this he has repeated that a large number of workers are involved and this necessitates immediate action on the part of the Government, so that industrial undertakings can be taken over in the interests of continued production and employment. This point is being correctly emphasized here.

Finally, on page 4 of the statement he has made out even more explicitly:

> "...Since the situation of low production and unemployment was fraught with possibilities of law and order and other problems, immediate action by way of promulgation of an Ordinance had to be taken..."

* Participating in the discussion on the Industries (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 1971; *L.S. Deb.*, 16 December 1971.

I have no quarrel at all with this statement, but when we come to its translation into the terms and provisions of a piece of legislation, we find that what the Government is concerned with here apparently is only the question of production. As far as the Bill goes, they have completely given the go-by to the question of guarantees that those workers who are thrown out of employment for no fault of theirs, simply due to the reckless or whimsical action of the employers, have to be taken back into employment and that there should be no reduction of employment. This has been given a complete go-by without any explanation whatsoever as far as this Bill is concerned. I am really surprised at this.

My hon. friend Shri Jyotirmoy Basu has mentioned it, but I would like to repeat it. I saw the Labour Minister here a minute ago, but he is not there now. I am sure you, Sir, will also find it distressing the way this Government functions between one Ministry and another. Only five or six days before this Ordinance was promulgated, the 27th session of the Indian Labour Conference took place in Delhi on 22 and 23 October, and the Ordinance was promulgated on 1 November. This Indian Labour Conference which is supposed to be a very important one, which was attended by all the representatives of all the employers' organisations, the Central Trade Unions, the State Governments and so on, came to certain unanimous conclusions which are recorded. If Shri Moinul Haque Chowdhury asks his colleague to supply him with a copy of the officially recorded unanimous conclusions of that conference, he will find there that when they discussed this problem of closures, they had also suggested that Government should come forward with some legislative measures. There, they have said quite clearly, and I am quoting:

> "Legislative provisions of governmental machinery for take-over should ensure continuity of employment and production. Consequent upon the take over, there should not be any reduction in employment or emoluments, nor should there be any adverse effect on service conditions and benefits."

This is the unanimous conclusion of the Indian Labour Conference, and five or six days later, another Ministry drafts an Ordinance, which is now brought forward in the shape of a Bill, which runs strictly counter to this unanimous conclusion. Is it one Government functioning, or separate Governments functioning, independently in separate Ministries, we are unable to understand. I think there should be a little more co-ordination, but the whole outlook behind this Bill, as far as the workers are concerned, is a completely capitalist outlook, if I may say so.

The workers of the closed undertakings are put on the same footing as any other physical assets. Workers who are human beings with families and

children are considered in this Bill to be equivalent to a piece of iron or coal or something like that. No difference. I have not got the time to go into a detailed examination of the provisions, but I would draw attention to section 18FB, which has come forward with this extraordinary proposition that when a unit is taken over, the operation of the Industrial Employment Standing Orders Act, the Industrial Disputes Act and the Minimum Wages Act will remain suspended and all contractual obligations, agreements, settlements, awards and all proceedings in courts and tribunals will be kept suspended. That means, any agreements or tribunal awards which have been in force there, relating to the workers' wages, DA, etc., can be suspended.

Section 18FA and clauses (2) to (4) of section 18FF are absolutely anti-working class provisions to the extent that while a provision is made that the terms and conditions for reopening the units will be shown to the shareholders' and creditors' representatives and so on for their approval and suggestion, while provision is made that the High Court before it approves of the reconstruction scheme, will also solicit the opinions of the shareholders and creditors, there is no provision that the workers' trade union representatives will be even consulted. It is an extraordinary state of affairs. We will never support a Bill like this containing such retrograde provisions and which does not guarantee that the workers who have been thrown out will be taken back. Rather, there are provisions that the authorised person who will be in charge of running the undertaking can pick and choose arbitrarily who will be taken back and who will be kept out. Even the question of seniority is not put in. It gives a free hand to the so-called authorised person. Our experience of nationalisation of banks or taking over of the management of general insurance companies is that in all these cases, the authorised persons, whether they are called custodians or by any other name, have invariably been the very same people who were associated with the earlier management. The same people who had closed down the concerns are brought back and put in charge as custodians or authorised persons to run the Government administered undertakings. These people, with their mentality and outlook towards the workers, will certainly utilise these provisions, which I have cited, to their detriment. Any worker whom they do not like can be arbitrarily kept out. These sweeping powers have been given to them. This is most objectionable and we cannot accept this under any circumstances. We will have to vote against these clauses quite definitely? I think the Labour Minister will also be put to a considerable amount of embarrassment because having brought the Indian Labour Conference to agreed conclusions precisely on these points so that these safeguards are provided, we find the Government going back on all those assurances and promises.

After all this is only an enabling power to take over. Certainly it facilitates the process of taking over by government and to that extent this is a positive

thing. It makes it easier for the Government now to take over and it certainly removes from the scene any of those technical or legal obstacles and difficulties which were preventing such take overs. But I would like to know from the Government, from the Minister when he replies, what sort of intention they have at the moment of taking over and whether at least those concerns would be taken over into which under the old unamended Act enquiries have already been held. They may not be required in the future but in the past they were required. So, enquiries have been held into a large number of cases of closure, enquiries have been completed and reports have been submitted and they are lying with the Minister. Some of those companies have gone into liquidation and the proceedings are pending in some cases. We know very well the name of Shri Haridas Mundhra, a gentleman who does not have a very savoury reputation, who was connected with quite a number of concerns. For example, there is Alock Ashdon, one of the engineering concerns in the western part of the country. Then there is Makintosh Burn. Such companies have either closed down or are on the verge of closure and these matters have been brought to the government's attention long-long ago. Now, if this Bill is passed as it stands, he has sufficient powers under it. Is he really going to assure the House that in the case of those units which are lying closed for a long time, which are vital units, which have huge orders pending, government orders, defence orders, export orders, are those concerns going to be allowed to be mismanaged and remain closed like this or is the government going to take them over? That is what I would like to know in the case of industries in respect of which enquiries have been completed. Then, it has been brought to my notice that the BNR textile mills at Rajnandgaon, Madhya Pradesh, is closed for months together, enquiries have been completed and reports have been submitted. What does the government propose to do about it? Then there is a concern which is directly connected with Defence orders, the Defence Ministry knows about it, called the Andhra Scientific Company. The owners of it were people who were not connected with industry; they were big landlords. They had too much of money, they did not know what to do with it, they invested it and set up the Andhra Scientific Company, and it has worked on defence orders. Now the landlord owners of the company, having squandered and mismanaged the company, have run away and the company is not functioning. It has to be taken over, particularly in the interests of defence. What does the Government propose to do there?

Therefore, I would only say that as far as the enabling powers are concerned, to enable these units to be taken over, we welcome this Bill as a step forward, but we would like to have a firm assurance from the Government that they are actually going to use those powers. As far as the other provisions which relate to workers are concerned, we are completely opposed to them.

That part of the Bill is completely retrograde and the trade unions throughout the country are united in their opposition to it. So, I would request him to reconsider this. A number of amendments have been tabled by various members. He should study them and accept at least one or two which will see to it that the workers' jobs are guaranteed and their terms and conditions of service are not changed to their detriment and they are also given a chance to have a voice in each particular case of restructuring of those companies.

THE CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL SECURITY FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1983*

Sir, I rise to oppose this Bill. The background of this Bill, I think, dates back to the year, 1979, when the Janata Government was in power here and there was very serious and widespread revolt in the ranks of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in many States which, you will remember, culminated in the tragic happenings at the Bokaro Steel Plant where the CISF personnel were involved in a direct clash with the Army. The Army was ordered into action to quell the so-called revolt of the CISF personnel and there was exchange of fire and about 22 or 25 CISF *jawans*, I do not remember the exact number, were killed in that firing. There were two or three casualties on the Army side also. But apart from the Bokaro incident, there was widespread unrest and agitation in different parts of the country. I should have thought that one of the lessons which the present Government would draw from that experience is to learn the reasons for this very explosive outburst which took place and the reason was the fact that there was no machinery, no provision, no arrangement by which these *jawans* of the CISF could represent or ventilate their grievances, even if the grievances were justified. Had there been some such machinery, some such provision, perhaps in good time, the Government could also have been warned that these things were accumulating below the surface and discontent was mounting and steps could have been taken to remedy the situation before it burst out. But in the absence of any such provision and in the absence of these Jawans being able to go to anybody, to any of their senior officers, to represent their grievances, these very serious happenings took place. Of course, I would not expect Shri Laskar** to say that all this happened because the Janata Government was there. This is one subject, one topic, you will find, where he will not blame the Janata Government for it; whatever they may do on other counts; here they are of the same mentality as the people at that time were. At that time the Home Minister was Shri H.M. Patel who was a former Secretary of the Defence Ministry and his mind was thoroughly defence-oriented, military-oriented. In this matter, of course, our Congress (I) friends have no complaints. Later, on when things were brought to light, it was found that the CISF

*Participating in the discussion on the Central Industrial Security Force (Amendment) Bill, 1983; *L.S. Deb.*, 3 May 1983.

**Referring to Shri Nihar Ranjan Laskar, the then Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

jawans were not even given proper uniforms in proper condition to wear, they went about in tattered and torn uniforms which were not replaced. Could these very fundamental and life-and-death matters not have been solved in time? It came to light that officers, as officers do at other places also, employed illegally, irregularly, these *jawans* for their private duties in their houses—make them take their children to school and bring them back from school, take their dogs for a walk in the park and go with the *Memsahib* when she goes to *bazaar* for marketing. These are not the duties of the *jawans* of the CISF who are supposed to protect and ensure the security of these public sector undertakings. All these things came to light later on, things which could have been settled long before if there had been any normal, rational, logical machinery for them to be able to represent their grievances. That was not done. Later on, when severe disciplinary action was taken, a large number of people were removed from service, many hundreds or perhaps a thousand or two thousand were suspended, many were transferred, there were various forms of punishment inflicted on them, during the remaining period of the Janata regime, these people had been going around making representations to various people, including Smt. Indira Gandhi who was then out of office. I remember very well that they had approached Shri Y.B. Chavan who was also out of office. And at that time these leaders had given them all sorts of assurances and promises saying, "What can we do now? We are not in power; the Janata Party people are in power; but if any day we have the opportunity again, we will certainly see to it that justice is done to you because we think that you have got very reasonable grievances and we do not approve of this kind of punishment and victimisation which is being carried on." I would like to ask Shri Laskar as to what has happened to all that now, now that they are back in power and the Janata Government is no more. Now they have come forward with this Bill, draconian Bill, and I would like to ask them whether, simply by making this force an armed force, it is going to ensure better security and protection of the undertakings. For that matter, what is the meaning of 'Armed Force'? It is a technicality. They are, of course, armed: they have got arms; they do not always carry arms with them, but they are not a force which have no arms; they have arms. In 1979 the Army was used to seal off and to occupy some of the armouries of the CISF. Where do the armouries come from if they have no arms? In plain, commonsense language, they are an armed force, they have got arms. They had even exchanged fire with the Army at Bokaro, I may remind you. I do not approve of these things. But the point of the matter is that they have got arms. The CISF was established in the year 1969 following that very disastrous fire which took place in the Heavy Engineering Plant at Ranchi and which was suspected to be due to sabotage. Then the CISF was brought into existence and it has been in existence for a pretty long time. Now I can tell you from my experience that the CISF which is now deployed at various public sector undertakings

is as incompetent and inefficient as the Railway Protection Force in preventing theft of property, pilferage and various similar things. You should know that. I can tell him that in the Calcutta port, for example, a huge amount of pilferage goes on from the godowns of the port and so on. It may be going on in other parts also...

*** *** ***

...You will be surprised to know that whole railway lines which belong to the Port Trust railway and which are laid inside the area of the Port Commissioners, have been removed and physically carried away. Nobody knows who took them away and where. The CISF is supposed to be on duty there. So this is not the way that simply by saying that now it has become an 'armed force', stricter discipline will be there on the members of the force and so on and that they are going to ensure better protection or security.

I also suspect, as Shri Satyanarayan Rao said just now, that the Home Ministry is also anxious to be a master of huge armed force under its disposal under various heads. I would like to know from Shri Laskar what is the total number now of all that—the BSF, CRPF and CISF. The figure of the CISF is given here—that it has gone up from 2000 to 49,000 officers and men. Then there is the Indo-Tibetan force and Assam Rifles and various para-military and military forces which are under the direct command of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. What is their total number? That total number I would like to know. Are they trying to build a parallel kind of armed force which will compete with the Defence forces? They want to build up a big empire of the armed people under their direct control. I do not see why should they do this at all. The CISF is an armed force. They do possess arms. If you want to give them better arms and train them better, that is a different matter. But they have not said anything about that.....

*** *** ***

The object is that they are to see—first of all the people who are working in these undertakings, that is, our workers on whom ultimately the successful operation of these undertakings depends and not on the CISF: it depends on the people working inside and who are our own public sector workers and if some people are there, and this can be everywhere, who may be indulging in some thefts, the job of the CISF is to detect them, prevent them and search them sometimes when they go in and go out as the various bodies like—you know, watch and ward and that type of people used to do before CISF came into existence. I do not see that there is any necessity for such a big piece of legislation. It will only encourage them, as Prof. Rup Chand Pal correctly said, to use this new power in a very oppressive and repressive manner against the workers. There is no guarantee at all against that. For example,

this arrest without warrant which is being provided for. It says that any member of the CISF, even an ordinary constable or jawan, can arrest anybody without a warrant. I think in similar types of legislation which we have got, there is at least some provision that nobody below a certain rank can exercise this power. Here, there is no safeguard at all. Any ordinary constable or jawan of the CISF can go about arresting people without warrant. I object most strongly to this. There are ranks of people here—head constables, Naiks, etc. in this organisation but when it comes to the power to arrest without warrant, there is no limitation whatsoever. Even an ordinary constable who may be himself involved in some way or other with some miscreants or may be in collusion with some people, as we can see, if he is given such a power that he can arrest anybody without warrant, I think it is liable to very serious types of misuse. This power cannot be given and it must be restricted, making it clear that nobody below a certain rank can exercise this power. Here any member of this force can do it.

Then, Sir, about the right to form association, I remember, Sir, that in 1979-80, after that big agitation had been suppressed, these people were assured—I was looking up and I have got the old records. They had some discussions with the Deputy Prime Minister, with the officials of the Home Ministry and with the Inspector General of the CISF. This was in October 1979. A statement was issued, signed by Shri R.P. Pandit, Chief Convener of the Association, Shri K.R. Nair, Member of the Central Negotiating Committee and Shri P. Manoharan Nair, Member of the Central Committee of the Association.

Here, they say in this Statement that they were given a sympathetic hearing by the Home Minister. Then, they had discussions with the Inspector-General and the Government had agreed to approve of the formation of associations in the CISF units. That is to say, it was agreed that at the units level, they would be allowed to form associations specifically for the purpose of representing their grievances. They must have some channel or there must be some channel. You cannot close all channels and choke them off.

*** *** ***

They were told that they cannot have associations at the State level or at all India level. They will not be permitted. But, they will be allowed to have associations at units level for representing their grievances.

Here, of course, everything is ruled out. They are threatened with dire punishment and penalty if they join or establish or form an association at any level. What is this? I think they are absolutely acting like blind people. They will land themselves in some trouble later on. This is not the way that you can treat your employees. There must be some reasonable way of dealing

with these things. Therefore, I agree that there is a big scope here for misuse. He should give the matter a second thought. Just because something has been drafted and brought here it does not mean that it cannot be improved or rectified. Sir, I do not have much to say about this. But, I would say that the right to form or join appropriate associations, through which they can represent their grievances or their demands or whatever they may be, is essential. This right must be given to them. The power to arrest without warrant first of all, I think, is an odious thing. It should be removed altogether and nobody should be arrested without warrant. If they insist on keeping such an obnoxious clause, then, it must not be restricted to any ordinary constable or *jawan*. They should not be given such a draconian power. It must at least be restricted to some level of officers. Officers below that rank should not be allowed to exercise this power.

I would also finally suggest that the Minister should look into the assurances which were given at that time. He will find that there were two types of assurances given—one was that the cases of a large number of people who had been suspended, who had been dismissed and victimised and all that in various ways, would be sympathetically considered. And, as far as possible, those victimisation measures would be vacated; the suspension orders would be withdrawn. The second assurance was about the formation of association at the units level. Now, it seems to me that the Congress Government is trying to outdo the Janata Government at that time. The Janata Government carried out a very big repression and, perhaps they were panicstricken. I believe they were quite panicked when the CISF unrest took place. Panick is not a good counseller. In a mood of panick, they behaved in that manner. But these Congress leaders went round at that time assuring the CISF that if ever they came back to power, they would treat them very generously, leniently and all that kind of thing. It is time, I think, for them to show whether they are really serious about the assurance which they gave. May be, at that time, they were in the Opposition. Now that they have come back to power, they should not have the slightest hesitation in honouring this assurance. So, I would like Shri Laskar when he replies to the debate to speak about these things. As far as this Bill is concerned, I consider it to be a dangerous type of Bill. It is totally unnecessary and it will not add to better protection or security by simply declaring it to be an armed force. So, I am totally opposed to this Bill and I suggest to the hon. Minister to withdraw it and bring it again after suitable amendments and it need not be incorporated as part of the armed force at all.

THE ESSENTIAL SERVICES MAINTENANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1985*

Though it is not normal to oppose a Bill at the introduction stage, this is such a vital matter that many of us on this side feel that it should be opposed. This Bill was enacted in 1981 and was subsequently given Presidential assent on 23 September. This Act, as it stands at present, lays down in clear terms that its operation will be only for four years. There is no provision in the Act itself that it can go on being extended, without reference to Parliament or by Presidential action. Now, we suddenly see in the newspapers that the Cabinet has decided a few days ago that they would like to extend the operation of this Act for four years. When the Bill has come now, we see that it is to be extended for five years. It means that it is more or less a part of the 7th Five-Year Plan. The Planning Minister is also here. Many things are planned for the 7th Plan, and this appears to be one of them.

When this Essential Services Maintenance Act was first put on the Statute Book, I think they will remember that there was vehement opposition to it from the people against whom it was aimed, *viz.* the working class and trade union movement. We are talking about 21st Century, for modernizing industry and introducing new ideas, new technology and new approaches to take the country forward. But the point is whether we can do these things along with a piece of legislation which is utterly retrograde not in the light of the 21st Century, but which smacks of some earlier period. It is a thoroughly anti-labour, repressive piece of legislation, which is thoroughly autocratic in all its aspects. It is a draconian piece of legislation, whose purpose is to impose a blanket ban on strikes. Not only that; even Go-Slow is being treated as equivalent to a strike.

It means if there is a thing like this hanging over the heads of the workers at all times, any time any strike, action they resort to even after giving due notice, after going through negotiations, after going through conciliation, after going through the process of negotiation, at any stage, this Act can be invoked in order to illegalise and ban that strike; it means that the collective bargaining, the whole spirit of collecting bargaining, of negotiations between the employers and the employees, of trying to reach through negotiations

* Participating in the discussion on the Essential Services Maintenance (Amendment) Bill, 1985; *L.S. Deb.*, 12 August 1985.

some agreement, is all being vitiated and prejudiced from the very beginning, because no employer will agree to anything, because he knows if it comes to the crunch, government is there always to declare the strike illegal.

What provision has been proposed if somebody goes on strike under this Act? The Government decides. Government means when it is implemented, it can be implemented by any State Government. Only the Government of West Bengal declared every time publicly that they would never invoke the provisions of this Act to suppress strike against the workers. The provisions provide that not only the workers can be imprisoned, can be dismissed from their job summarily for having taken part in the strike, but officials of the trade unions who are supposed to be responsible for the so-called illegal strike can be removed from office by action of the government. Therefore, this is thoroughly a draconian, anti-labour piece of legislation. I was really hoping in my mind; now I find that I was suffering from some illusion that this government might decide to let the Act lapse, because if they are suffering from the wrong theory that the fear of the *danda* is going to prevent workers from going on strike, if they feel that they had some just cause, it did not happen. What has happened during this period of the pendency of this Act is this. You had the longest strike in the history of this country. The Bombay textile strike which went on for one and a half years, took place precisely in this period when ESMA was there. On 19 January 1982, you had an all India general strike in which at least 50 per cent of the organized workers of the country participated. Many were victimized; many were arrested; many were lathi-charged, because they went on strike, because they felt that they had some just cause for which they were fighting.

In the 'National Labour Conference' which was held after the ESMA was promulgated, all the Central trade unions, except INTUC, boycotted that Conference in protest against this legislation. I want to point out that the provision for maintenance, so-called maintenance of essential supplies and commodities and services is provided for already in the National Security Act, specifically even in the latest Anti-Terrorists and Anti-Disruptive Activities Act which was passed in the name of Punjab. There is a provision which clearly lays down in that act that anything which is done which may disrupt the supply of essential goods and services, will come under the mischief of that act, and you can be punished for two years. How many acts, how many provisions they would like to have in the name of maintenance of essential services, supplies, I would like to know? If this is the concept of the government, the Planning Commission and the Labour Ministry and all that, that this is the way they are going to get cooperation of the workers by permanently holding a sword over their heads, this is completely against the spirit of democracy where we are supposed to have parliamentary democracy. You don't want collective bargaining, negotiations and settlement.

10,000 factories are lying closed today according to the Labour Minister and the Industry Minister. They have not been closed by the workers; they have been closed by the employers—everybody knows. Then the essential commodities and production are held up by the employers, by so-called closure and lock-out and all that. ESMA is not used against them; ESMA is never used against the employers; ESMA is used only to suppress the right of the workers to go on strike if they cannot get their demand settled by any other way. But this is the character of the government; I am not surprised that this is the class character of the government. They are pro-employer and anti-labour. This is the real substance of the whole thing. They may say whatever they like, whatever crocodile tears they may shed for the workers, when it comes to the pinch, they will stand by the employers and see that the workers' right to fight for minimum wages and the standard of living is suppressed. Perhaps this is an omen. This Bill is coming again now to extend the life of the act for another five years.

That they do admit in their heart of hearts that during the five years of the Seventh Five Year Plan there is going to be tremendous inflation, there is going to be price rise and a reduction of the workers' real income, there is going to be retrenchment, there is going to be displacement of labour and more unemployment due to this so-called new technology which is going to be imported from outside and installed in so many industries and therefore they are apprehending that the workers will resist. The workers are not going to allow their jobs to be taken away and their incomes to be reduced and they are likely to step up their trade union agitation, which, I believe, is not illegal, it is permitted in this country under the Constitution. There is a right to the trade union to agitate peacefully for their demands. But you want to suppress all those by holding this out against them. And, therefore, I am totally opposed to this, as a negation of the free spirit of industrial democracy which is being talked about and this Bill should be withdrawn, if the Government have any sense; let them reconsider the matter, if they want any cooperation of the workers, let them withdraw this Bill and come forward to cooperate with the workers.

I consulted the proceedings of the last day's discussion and I find to my surprise that two hon. members who spoke after the hon. Mover, both of them gentlemen who are associated with the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), seemed to have felt some sort of an alarm or panic by this Resolution. Much of what they said was quite off the mark and irrelevant because this Resolution does not make any reference to the question of compulsory recognition by the employers. I drafted this Resolution and I know exactly what is meant to say. It says that rival unions should be compelled to have their influence tested periodically by reference to a secret ballot of the workers concerned. It does not refer to the question of recognition explicitly because that is a totally different question and I am not taking it up here in the compass of this Resolution. Whatever means you adopt, whether it is to be a secret ballot or the existing method of verification under the code, it does not necessarily follow that the employers will honour it. My experience as a trade unionist in Bengal at any rate is that even after this code has been adopted and verification procedure had been adopted, hardly one or two per cent of the employers come forward voluntarily to recognise the unions whose representative character has been established by the verification proceedings. They will not necessarily do any better on the basis of the results of the ballot. I do not mean to imply that at all. That is not my question. We are not debating here the question of recognition because that will never come about until there is some statutory compulsion on the employers. Otherwise, they will continue to go their own free way and only where the unions have the requisite strength to compel them we may be able to get recognition. But this question is different. This is a question of trade union democracy. I would request the Minister to pay a little attention to that. I am not quarrelling here with the INTUC or any other thing. I find that the speeches were made in the spirit as though there was a battle between the INTUC and All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) or something like that. I am not at all concerned here for the moment with that. I am concerned with the question of trade union democracy, irrespective of the union's affiliation; it may be with the INTUC or the AITUC or anybody's union. It is not that question. This is not a question of competition between the INTUC and the AITUC. I am only

* Speaking on a Resolution regarding the Representative Character of Trade Unions; *L.S. Deb.*, 10 August 1962.

concerned with Government policy regarding the question of bringing about some sort of greater democracy in the functioning of the trade unions because I consider that to be a question which is vitally bound up with the whole question of industrial relations and industrial peace which are the professed aims of everybody. We want you to carry out the plan. If it was only a question of rival unions belonging to different central trade union organisations, the question would be a different one. I cannot refrain from mentioning a very unfortunate event which is probably still continuing.

I am mentioning the strike which has taken place in the Parbelia colliery in Purulia district which was formerly within the State of Bihar, and later on included in the State of West Bengal on the border. That colliery is situated on the border. It is a very distressing fact that at a time when coal production should be increased and everybody wants that, a strike is going on in this colliery. Section 144 has been declared. The mine is closed due to the quarrel between two unions, both of which are affiliated to the INTUC, one owing allegiance to the West Bengal branch of the INTUC and the other to the Bihar branch of the INTUC. It is not a question of the INTUC or the AITUC. My point is that this verification which is the present procedure that is being followed, namely, the membership claim of unions, is checked only on the basis of the books and papers and registers, by officials of the Government, is not in my opinion, satisfactory at all. I am not saying that this should be given up, because, under the Indian Trade Unions Act itself, whether we like it or not, every year, every registered trade union has to maintain its books, records and accounts and submit them to the Registrar of Trade Unions. So, there is no question of giving that up. But my experience is that this verification procedure, with which has been connected the problem of recognition, which can be or should be given voluntarily by the employers, has led to very many abuses.

I am not blaming anybody. I am saying that the unions feel that on the very basis of this paper verification, our claims to recognition will be either upheld or rejected. The way has been opened to a lot of what is called bogus membership, inflated membership, being shown. I know of cases where sometimes the employers themselves provide certain unions with lists of names from the registers of the company, and help that way to show an inflated list of membership. False receipts are maintained and there is no possible way that I know of, by which this can be effectively checked.

Therefore, to claim that this procedure of verification is a satisfactory one for establishing the claim of a union is, in my opinion, completely wrong. I am not saying that any particular party is to be blamed or not. But by its very nature, this procedure leaves the way open for a certain amount of intimidation being exercised on the workers, both by the employers and by the official agencies.

Secondly, bogus claims are put forward and bogus membership rolls can easily be maintained, and are being maintained. Therefore, the point that I want to raise is, do you want to have unions in the context of the Third Five Year Plan which claim to be representative on the basis of their manufactured, paper-returns but are not in a position to deliver the goods, whose leaders enter into an agreement with employers sometimes behind the back of the workers and even without consulting them. Then, when they go to implement that agreement, it is found that the overwhelming majority of the workers repudiate that agreement because there was no consultation at the stage when the agreement was being entered into. Is that conducive to industrial peace? I do not think so.

There are one or two exceptions among the employers in individual units who have been realistic enough to understand that if their production is to be increased, and if production is to be maintained uninterruptedly, then it is better, irrespective of other extraneous considerations, to have dealing with a union which really commands influence and strength among the workers so that if they enter into any negotiations or agreement with that union they at least have the confidence that they will be honoured and maintained and accepted by the workers. By the present procedure it cannot be done. Therefore, I am suggesting in this resolution that further steps should be taken towards proper recognition. Not that books and registers will not have to be maintained. They have to be, but I submit that that should be supplemented by another provision to the effect that the membership of registered unions should be periodically checked by a secret ballot. It does not matter whose union it is. It may be that in a particular place the claims of the INTUC union cannot be substantiated and in another place it may be that my union's claims cannot be substantiated. But when it is put to the test of the ballot, what is there to be afraid of? I do not understand why my hon. friends of the INTUC get so frightened about it whenever this is raised. Nor do I understand the Government's argument against this thing. Of course, some may argue that after all, ballots and elections can also be open to malpractice and abuse. That is true. I do not think there is any hon. member in this House who can put his hand on his heart and say that the very elections on the results of which he is sitting here—and we are all sitting here—are free of malpractice and abuse. However much we are trying to avoid it, everybody knows what goes on, and the elections are the commonly accepted way in our country, the most democratic means that are available to us in the present context. Beginning from panchayats and municipalities, right up to the State Assemblies and the Parliament, this is the method which we have adopted whatever may be its shortcomings and certain abuses to which it may be open and so on.

Even in factories, in industrial establishments, there is one provision, namely, that a statutory works committee of that establishment has to be

elected by the workers in that factory. It is a very good thing. But when it comes to the question of verifying claims of a union regarding its membership, why is it that the same democratic procedure is not extended there? Why is it that the workers are not being given a chance to express their will through a secret ballot which will guarantee to some extent that they will be free from coercion of any kind? Some hon. friends may say that it is the INTUC which does not indulge in coercion. I may say the same thing about another union. But put it to the secret ballot where nobody can coerce anybody else and see what the result will be. I do not know if the Minister is aware that an experiment of this type was tried out in Madras. The State Labour Minister, Shri Venkataraman, did agree a year or two ago to having a plebiscite or something like that in the case of some rival unions in respect of the Madras City State Transport. This was agreed to and a ballot was held. It was agreed before the ballot was held that whoever or whichever union got the majority of votes would be recognised by the Madras State Transport Department. But I regret to say that when the result of the ballot was announced, they went back on that assurance and refused to recognise that union. The same thing happened in one of the big textile mills in Madurai. I do not know exactly what is there in the Government's mind, behind this aspect. I would submit that they should consider themselves not in their spiritual or political affiliation to any particular trade union organisation, but as a Ministry, not only of Labour but of Planning also—both are combined—and look at the problem from this point of view, namely, how to bring about more democracy in the inner functioning of the trade unions so that they are in a better position to deliver the goods and therefore contribute to a better industrial relation and industrial peace.

*** *** ***

If this provision is accepted by the Government, it will do good. I am not going into the details, because it is only a question of principle that is involved here. The parties concerned can sit round a table and discuss how it is to be worked out and how it can be implemented in practice. But if the principle is not accepted, I am afraid there will really not be much of a change in the present position and industrial strikes will continue, because very often they are based on the fact that unions which are not really representative of the workers, put forward claims or enter into agreements which have no basis of support among the workers. I hope the Minister will consider this question and give a favourable reply.

Mr. Chairman, this is quite a serious matter into which I do not want to inject any frivolty, especially when it affects the lives and livelihood of some lakhs of people in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam and Andhra Pradesh. Lakhs of farmer families are dependent on this industry for their existence apart from the workers in the mills and apart from several lakhs of people connected with the jute trade; and the workers in the mills incidentally are not all from West Bengal. Only a very small minority is from West Bengal; the rest are from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and so on. Please remember these things.

*** *** ***

...It is a serious matter. I would have thought that the Minister being a Minister of Commerce and having to carry a trade deficit of Rs. 5,600 crore, perhaps more than that this year, he should be more worried about the industry as an earner of foreign exchange. This is the crisis which he is facing in his own Ministry and obviously cannot solve because it is a huge problem connected with so many international factors. The industry which held the pride of place at one time as our major foreign exchange earner, this jute industry is now apparently reduced to a stage where the Minister feels—he has not said so in many words—this is what I understand from him, that this industry has no future. Why should we put money for nationalisation into an industry which cannot be revived? That is what he said. If I misunderstood him, please clarify again. I would like to know if he really believes that this industry has no future. He should tell this House. Tomorrow it will be in the newspapers. I do not know what his friends of the Indian Jute Mills Association (IJMA) feel and how they will react to it in Calcutta. If he believes that this industry has no future, then why are they preparing now to pay some more money, vast sums of money to the mill owners? Already he has said here—

> "The jute industry has represented its working capital problems as also financial accommodation of long term nature."

* Participating in the debate on the Calling Attention Motion on Closure of Jute Mills in West Bengal; *L.S. Deb.*, 14 July 1982.

They are going to consider them. He has said in his statement that they have already submitted their requirements. His junior Minister Shri P.A. Sangma replying to my question only five days ago on 9 July said—

> "Union Finance Minister and West Bengal Chief Minister met on 1.7.1982 with the concerned officials and representatives, of the Indian Jute Mills Association. In pursuance of this meeting the Indian Jute Mills Association will have to submit a detailed memorandum regarding the nature and extent of financial accommodation required by them."

So, whether they have already submitted or have been asked to submit, I do not know. There were two slightly contradictory things here. Whatever it is, so for an industry which has no future, for an industry which cannot be revived, into which you do not want to give money from exchequer to waste it when it is required for much more important things, if our only concern is to ask them—please let us know how much financial accommodation you require to get your mills going again and so on and Government will oblige them. I know it will oblige them. It has been obliging them in the years past. Last year a scandalous thing happened to which my other colleagues have referred. It is not only an amount of Rs. 92 crore which was given to them last year in the name of purchasing raw jute, they said they have no liquid capital. So, the Reserve Bank of India gave them credit of Rs. 92 crore. They were not satisfied. After a little bit of more of pressurisation his predecessor gave them another Rs. 27 crore making a total of Rs. 119 crore given to them from the exchequer for raw jute purchase and now both Shri Pranab Mukherjee and Shri Jyoti Basu have publicly stated it has come out all in the Press—that this money was not spent for buying raw jute. It was diverted to some other purpose..... Will you allow anybody to cheat the exchequer and run away with hundred crore of rupees? ... They should be punished for this. You cannot recover that money..... You cannot even penalise.

I do not expect you either to agree with me or to reply to my questions—all of them, but at least you take a note of what I am saying. Now just permit me to say this—always it has been the history in this industry for the Government, previous Governments also, to accept at their face value whatever story of recession, crisis, etc. these jute mill owners thought out. I am connected with this, something to do with this industry, at least with its workers for the last forty years. I began my career as a trade unionist in 1941-42 in this industry. I have lived in those jute areas. I know something about it. For forty years I have heard nothing from IJMA people except the crisis, recession, market difficulties, this and that.

Now, the hon. Minister has stated in his statement:

> "In recent months, overseas demand for our jute goods had shrunk in a distressing manner on account of competition from synthetic substitutes and other major goods producing countries."

Is that a fact? I only request him humbly when he goes back from here, to go into the official figures and convince himself whether this is a fact or whether it is just a propaganda being put out. There has been some fall in demand and there has been recession in the United States market. I agree that is true. For years we have been saying, "Don't depend so much on one market only; don't become over-dependent on one United States market over which you have no control. Suppose a crisis or depression takes place in the United States. You will be in a great difficulty. So, you try to diversify." They did not want to do it because here they were having a market where they were getting good profits and they were completely oriented towards the United States market.

What has happened today? There is a fall there. They were taking carpet backing cloth which they required mainly for the housing sector, for housing projects, for furniture, for the automobile industry and all that. Of course, President Reagan has got other ideas. He is more interested in rockets and missiles, super bombers and all that. So, the money has been cut down on the housing projects and the automobile industry. The United States is in the grip of a crisis. Everybody knows it. The thing that we had warned against many years ago is now coming home to roost.

The export of carpet backing cloth has been affected. I do not deny. In the United States our exports of jute goods, went down from 87,900 tonne in 1979-80 to 74,000 tonne in 1980-81. I agree. What has happened everywhere else? I cannot take the time of the house to give so many statistics. In the United Kingdom, in the rest of Western Europe, in USSR, in the rest of Eastern Europe, in Africa, there has been a dramatic rise in consumption of jute goods and exports from here from 12,000 tonne to 17,000 tonne; from 39,000 tonne to 78,000 tonne; from 1,02,000 tonne to 2,17,000 tonne; from 23,000 tonne to 34,000 tonne; from 14,000 tonne to 34,000 tonne in different parts of the world. Only in the United States, there has been a small fall.

The internal consumption has gone up from 5,19,700 tonne to 9,18,400 tonne. In the overall, if you take the total exports also, including USA, in 1979-80, the exports were to the tune of 3,71,000 tonne and, in 1980-81, they had gone upto 5,57,000 tonne. There may be a small fall in the American market to the tune of about 10,000 tonne or 15,000 tonne. I do not deny it. But is this the total picture of such terrible crisis, such recession, such disaster, facing this industry that they would be justified not only in closing down

17 mills and also demanding from the Government that they should be allowed to have a block closure of all the mills for one week, every month? Thank God the Government did not agree to it. I think, that is too much for them to swallow.

Then, they have now decided to cut down production by 4 hours every day by saying that no mill will operate from 6 P.M. to 10 P.M. ostensibly in order to save electricity and illegally depriving the workers of their wages under clause 2 (Section KKK) of the Industrial Disputes Act.... They are doing something which is totally illegal. They have to pay the workers full wages for 4 hours. I know, he will say. "Why doesn't the State Government do something about it?" We will do; don't worry. That will be done. But here I may say, as you know, Sir, as well as I do, that while the Industrial Disputes Act has some provision regarding the regulation of closure—I heard from you that it has been declared *ultra vires*—there is a provision that you cannot enforce the closure without giving notice to the Government and all that. There is no such regulatory provision about the lock-out. Nothing at all. They are saying constantly that the Act is there; the powers are there. He is saying, "Why doesn't your Government do something?". I say, please go home and read the Industrial Disputes Act carefully and tell us tomorrow under which provision—this is a Central Act passed by the Parliament here—of the Act there is any possibility of having powers for ending the lock-out. That has carefully and studiously been avoided. Nothing can be done.

*** *** ***

...I mentioned the export figures which are going up everywhere except in the USA.

To give an example, is he aware of the fact that an official delegation went just now recently to Australia and Japan to survey the market there for jute goods? It consisted of the Chairman of the Indian Jute Mills Association, the Jute Commissioner and the representative of the Jute Fabrics Shippers Association. Nobody belonging to the Opposition parties! They have come back from Australia and Japan and submitted their report and they have said that demand there for our jute goods is going down. There are three reasons, according to them.

One is intense competition among the Indian Shippers. You cannot regulate anything it seems! You are the Minister of Commerce.

Secondly, irregularity of supplies. They do not supply the goods properly on time.

Thirdly, sub-standard goods are being supplied. There is no quality control. There is no pre-shipment inspection of the goods.

It is their report, not mine.

*** *** ***

This is an example of how markets can also be lost. What the official delegation has said about Australia and Japan.

The Secretary of the Ministry, Shri A.K. Dutt, has only recently been sent to Calcutta to address the annual meeting of the Indian Jute Mills Association.

I am glad that the same downgrading has been done of this meeting where the Finance Minister or the Commerce Minister—once the Prime Minister at that time, I remember—used to rush there to address their annual general meetings.

Anyway, this time the Secretary of the Ministry went. In his remarks, what does he say? It is all out in the Press. Shri Dutt said:

> "A redeeming feature is the sign of recovery in the demand for Indian carpet packing cloth in the U.S. which should be fully reflected in the latter part of 1982, *i.e.* this year.
>
> The worst phase of the crisis is probably on its way out and the industry is now poised for a gradual recovery in the coming months."

Then, very sensibly Shri Dutt has also emphasised—I do not quote him now—several times the need for long-term planning. Do you think that the IJMA is capable of long-term planning? You yourself say that they have been unresponsive to the needs of modernisation or diversification. Nothing new going on for years. They are not interested in long-term planning.... They are speculators and they do not care that these mills are reduced to junks.

And your Secretary is lecturing to them in Calcutta on the need of long-term planning.

One of the things why we are asking for nationalisation is that only under State's control can that long-term planning be done which is necessary for the long-term health of this industry.

And you leave it to these people and go on giving them financial accommodation every year and go on giving them money to buy jute which they do not buy and they cheat you. How can you save this industry? Are you really trying to tell us—'you' means the Government—that you are not interested in this industry and that you do not mind if it collapses?

*** *** ***

The main question I want him to answer is whether he believes in the future of this industry or not.

The second thing is, about raw jute he has said this. I do not deny that something more than what has been done can be done and should be done; I myself feel that a part of the responsibility is ours also, that is, of the trade unions, the peasants' or farmers' organizations and the State Government, certainly. That is to say that this Jute Corporation of India will never be able to cope with the situation. That is obvious. We have been watching it functioning for so many years. That needs to be supplemented, I know, by a proper chain of cooperatives and all that. But you know what is the condition of the cooperative movement in the whole of eastern India. There are reasons for it. Do you want me to go into those reasons? Why the cooperative movement is advanced in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu and why it is backward in all the eastern States? There is some reason for it. Or, is it the temperament of the people? You should be a little sympathetic about it. Suppose we form those cooperatives; we will require financial accommodation which the IJMA gets easily from you.

*** *** ***

'You will give' means what? Please make a statement here on the floor of the House.*

You have admitted in this statement that the prices could not be sustained because of the virtual absence of these people from the market. That is what you have said in your statement. They deliberately withdrew from the market and forced the prices to go down. This is what they do every year. And the poor jute peasant is so poor that he has no holding capacity at all. Once his jute is ready, he has to sell it immediately for whatever price he can get. He cannot hold on to it. Therefore, we feel strongly and that is why I am asking him now whether he is prepared—forget for the time being Maharashtra and all that; full marks to Maharashtra; if they have done something, it is well and good, but forget Maharashtra for the time being—to consider the whole question of raw jute trading operation, if it is to be salvaged from the hands of these profiteers, these middle-men, these traders and all that, plus the running of these mills in the way it is necessary in order to diversify the production and, thirdly, export market, research and all that, which should be the concern of the Ministry of Commerce any way if they want to earn more foreign exchange. These objectives cannot be realised if all these three sectors are left in private hands. You have experimented long enough. The jute trade is in private hands the mills are in private hands, the export trade is in private hands. And the worse thing you have done is this. After nationalising five or six of the jute mills and after Shri Pranab Mukherjee's having told us very recently in Calcutta, assured us, that those nationalised

* Referring to Shri Shivraj V. Patil's observation, "we will give."

jute mills which were under National Jute Mills Corporation (NJMC) would be asked to go out of the membership, they had gone and joined the Indian Jute Mills Association. Shri Pranab Mukherjee said that he would see that they came out of the Indian Jute Mills Association and he would see that they did not follow the Indian Jute Mills Association's policies regarding production and buying of raw jute and all that. But I am sorry to say that, in this whole business now of closing down the operation of the mills for four hours from 6.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m., in the method of buying raw jute and all that, the nationalised mills are doing nothing except absolutely dittoing what the IJMA does, following completely in the footsteps of IJMA. Why has this been done? We welcomed when you nationalised the five or six mills. But that sector should not be a carbon copy of the private sector. It should show to the people that it is possible to have some different policy, to move on some different path. I want to know whether you are going to try through the nationalised sector, small as it is comprising only five or six mills, at least to show that you are capable of following some different policy with some different perspective, taking the cooperation of the workers also and seeing that the jute peasants get a proper price for the jute that you buy for the nationalised mills. It is not just a question of slogan of nationalisation. If this industry has no future, it is all right. Please say so. Let us go home and go to sleep. There is nothing to worry about it.

Would you have the courage to say so? If you feel that this industry has got some future, then it can never survive if it is left from the raw jute to the finished market stake in the hands of the private people who are only out to milk it and make money. That is why we are asking for nationalisation.

THE PLIGHT OF TOBACCO GROWERS*

Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Commerce to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

> "Reported plight of the tobacco growers in the country due to steep fall in the price of tobacco."

*** *** ***

On a first reading of the hon. Minister's statement it would appear at first sight that he has made quite a detailed statement and an exhaustive statement. But I regret to say that the extent and magnitude of the crisis which is faced by the tobacco growers particularly in Andhra Pradesh today has been very sadly minimised in this whole statement. For example, I think, in the beginning of the statement he has said:

> "Representations have been received from some tobacco growers' associations in Andhra Pradesh requesting for higher prices for Virginia Tobacco".

I do not know which growers' Association represented and met him. Of course, there may be somebody who has made a demand like this. But my information is that at present it is not a question of demanding higher prices at all. The real crux of the problem is the price which has already been fixed and declared by the Tobacco Board—which is Rs. 1,425 per quintal—that price is not actually being received by the farmers. The main reason for that is that the main traders who operate in the market are deliberately holding of from the market in order to depress the prices. That causes fall in price. This is the usual thing. This we see in the case of sugarcane, raw jute and other things. The question is not of demanding higher price. This is not the crux of the problem at all.

Roughly about 1 lakh farmer families and about 6 lakh workers are involved in this business, in this whole trade—industry and agriculture—in Andhra Pradesh. And in Andhra Pradesh, I believe that, well may be about

---

* Calling Attention to the reported plight of tobacco growers due to steep fall in the price of tobacco; *L.S. Deb.*, 17 March 1983.

nine districts—Nellore, Prakasam, Guntur, Krishna, East Godavari, West Godavari, Kurnool, Khammam and Karim Nagar—are mainly involved. Their whole economy and the livelihood of the people there depends primarily on the fortunes of tobacco crop and the trade. I think the Minister will also agree that tobacco is one of our most important items of export and we have been earning about Rs. 250 crore a year in foreign exchange. The Government is earning by way of excise duty a revenue of Rs. 800 crore per year from this tobacco.

What he has said about the increase in production is quite correct, more or less, because the farmers were actually encouraged. Last year, they were encouraged to sow a larger acreage and they were given to understand that there was plenty of demand and even if they extended the acreage, there would be no danger of any of their products being left unsold. So, the farmers have done that. In this country, of course, this is the most religious *mantram* and we are always told that you must grow more and produce more and that is the solution for all the problems of the country.

*** *** ***

I do not believe in these *mantrams* at all, because whenever you find there is greater production, you see, the producer eventually seem to suffer for it...

*** *** ***

What has happened is that the farmers in all good faith have extended their acreage. Production has gone up as the hon. Minister himself admits. But taking advantage of this rather large harvest, the traders are trying to exploit the situation and take advantage of it, because as you know, tobacco is a crop which cannot be kept in storage for long. A month or a month-and-a-half is perhaps the maximum for which it can be kept without getting spoiled. It is a perishable commodity and it loses its colour and gets discoloured—after that, it is not likely to be sold. So, the farmers have very little holding power. If the traders hold off the market and the condition for the present is such that they may even go in for distress sales.

Now, Sir, I come to the price which was fixed by the Tobacco Board, because that is the function of the Tobacco Board, I will come to the Tobacco Board later. He said everything about it when he had been talking about the Government and saying that we have done this and we have done that. It actually means the Tobacco Board which is the primary Government agency concerned with this matter. They have fixed a price of Rs. 1,425 per quintal for the V-I quality of tobacco. And the other grades, they have said, should

be bought at a price 10 per cent more than the price ruling last year. Now, my information is that the growers are perfectly willing to sell their crop at this price which has been fixed. It is not their complaint that the price is too low although there was some sort of a compromise or understanding reached between the traders, the growers and the State Government—the Chief Minister—that the prices could range between Rs. 1,250 and Rs. 1,400, a range of Rs. 1,250 to Rs. 1,400. And the growers' representatives with whom I am in contact tell me, they are agreeable even to this compromise which is lower than Rs. 1,425—a range of prices between Rs. 1,250 and Rs. 1,400—and it was agreed to in some discussions there. They are willing to sell even at this price.

But the real problem is that the traders are not entering the market. The Minister's statement gives a rather complacent understanding as if the trading operations are going on normally and one-third of the product is sold and so on. I think, perhaps he is referring only to those qualities of tobacco which are finer tobacco and which are exported to certain Western countries—to the United Kingdom, Canada and some other countries. But the rest of the whole crop, the bulk of the crop, including the medium and lower variety, has not been purchased at all. No purchasing operation has started so far and they are trying to force the price down to Rs. 600. They want to go below Rs. 1,200 if possible up to Rs. 600. I do not know whether the hon. Minister will agree with me that the cost of production of the farmers has also gone up in course of last year or two years with the increase in the cost of fertilisers or pesticides or manure. There has also been a great shortage of water and they are having to spend extra money on bringing water to irrigate the tobacco fields. All this has increased the cost of production. If in this situation, they are forced to make distress sales, it will mean practically the ruin of thousands and thousands of families.

About USSR, I would like to say one word. I am told that about 50 per cent of the medium and lower grades goes in bulk purchase by the USSR. But for this bulk purchase, there would have been a bigger crisis. But I find from the statement of the hon. Minister that:

> "USSR have indicated their willingness to purchase 35,000—40,000 of Virginia Flue Cured tobacco in 1983."

*** *** ***

They have not begun to purchase and the reason for that, I am told is, that it is due to trade balance difficulties and nothing else. They cannot go on buying. We will be buying nothing in return from them. The whole trouble is that. They have bought Rs. 500 crore worth of tobacco in the past years and naturally if we, in our barter trade do not buy from them, they will have no

rupee balances here to buy that. What are they going to do. I think in this matter the Government should take the House into confidence and tell us that. Because unless the Government moves in this matter, there may be some delay in the USSR placing its orders for the current year and that will eventually cause difficulties for the farmers. This is not a new thing. We know our balance of trade is running at such a heavy deficit with all other countries where we have to pay in hard currencies. He knows very well that in the rupee trade countries, the opposite is the situation. They are buying so much from us but we are unable to buy from them. Therefore, we are having a favourable balance of trade as against the socialist countries. But we are not living on their charity after all. It is a question of trade and commerce. So, if we delay in concluding our trade agreement with them it will not allow them to have adequate balances here. Then we cannot expect them to go on buying all commodities without anything in return. You please tell us about this, something. What is the position?

About the State Trading Corporation (STC), they stated here that a decision has been taken.

> "The STC should make commercial purchases of exportable varieties of VFC tobacco on no profit no loss basis."

I do not know what this means. I am told that the hon. Minister—if I am wrong you will correct me—has told some representatives of tobacco growers that if the STC enters the market now, it will be a big loss for the STC. I do not know if he really said this. Then what is the basis of no profit no loss? It means that if there is a possibility of loss, then STC will not operate. It can only mean this. But if STC does not enter the market and does not buy up this crop and leaves it to the mercy of the traders, then either there will be distress sales or a big portion of the crop will be ruined and become absolutely spoiled and next year the result will be that there will be much shorter acreage of tobacco sown. I hope that the tardiness of the operation of the STC is not due to any political reasons.

*** *** ***

Let me remind you of one thing. In 1979, there was a huge glut in tobacco market and prices fell disastrously and at that time the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh was Shri Chenna Reddi of Congress party. But here in Delhi the Central Government was in the hands of the Janata Party. For neither of these parties do I have very much love, but I am reminding you of the state of affairs. Shri Mohan Dharia was then the Minister of Commerce and in spite of this difference in the political equations between the Central Government and the State Government, at that time Shri Mohan Dharia did see to it that the STC entered the market and made adequate purchases so

that the farmers were saved. But now because Shri N.T. Rama Rao is there and Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh is here, I do not want political equations to enter into this.

*** *** ***

So, I would strongly request the Minister, demand from the Government, that, in order to save these farmers from ruin, the STC which is the main agency of the Central Government—and the Central Government is the responsible power in this case—should intervene, should enter the market. After all, what is the idea of fixing a price, declaring a price, by the Tobacco Board? The meaning of it should be that, when prices fall below the price fixed by the Tobacco Board, the Government or rather the STC has to take the responsibility of stepping in and seeing that the declared price at least is ensured to the farmers. Otherwise, fixing that price is meaningless. We have seen it happening in raw jute market at so many places: a minimum support price is declared, but the farmer never gets it, and when the price goes below that, nobody enters the market to save him. At some other time we will discuss jute, I am sure, with Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh, about the functioning of the Jute Corporation. As far as this Tobacco Corporation is concerned, I must say that it is an absolutely useless body, an impotent, useless body, because the Act by which this Tobacco Board is constituted has ensured that this Board will be absolutely helpless and unable to do anything effective in the interest of farmers. What it can do can only help the traders and nobody else. They have got a purchase voucher scheme under which when he sells his tobacco the farmer is given a voucher and 60 per cent of his price is supposed to be paid within ten days of the purchase; within ten days he will get 60 per cent of the price and the remaining 40 per cent, he will get after 90 days with 14 per cent interest. But, in actual practice what is happening is that they are not being paid and crore of rupees of arrears are lying, as in the case of sugarcane also as you know. Because this Government is always swearing day and night by the *kisans*, the country should know how they treat the *kisans* also. Who are these traders? The traders or most of them are agents of very big powerful forces, monopoly and multi-national forces, the Indian Tobacco Company, the Leaf Tobacco Development Company, the Indian Leaf Tobacco Development (ILTD) which is a big multinational company, the Golden Tobacco Company; these are the companies on whose behalf the traders are buying, and they have got big tobacco godowns in Andhra Pradesh where they store it. But not content with this, the Imperial Tobacco Company (ITCO) and ILTD have now started another thing, and that is they have started introducing machines in their factory at Rajahmundry where the work was done all these years by hand, by workers, many of them women workers. When the tobacco leaves come, they do the cleaning process and all that by hand. Now this company has closed down, first of all, two of

its godowns, and in Rajahmundry, in their factory, they are introducing automatic machines, so that this work can be done in such a way that hundreds of workers' jobs can be dispensed with. They have begun that already and these are the very people who are operating benami through these traders, who are trying to force down the prices and buy cheap so that they can maximise their profits. So, in conclusion, I would say and I would ask him: are you prepared to have a second look at the whole structure, the powers and the scope of this Tobacco Board. This Tobacco Board, I am told, is quite a useless body. It cannot buy tobacco, it has no funds at its disposal for buying tobacco, if necessary. It is only permitted to fix the price and announce it and even when it fixes the price it is not implemented and cannot be enforced. This Board is absolutely impotent and is unable to do anything. Then, what is the use of having a Tobacco Board like that?

So I would like to ask the Government whether they are prepared to amend this Act and invest this Board with proper statutory powers so that they can make purchases wherever necessary when prices fall below the rates which are fixed by themselves. And the composition of the Board should also be looked into so that it is not weighted in favour of these same traders and these companies and it becomes really a device by which the interests of the farmers can be protected. Without that there is no hope.

I will just sum up by saying that the statement which the hon. Minister has given, if it is just read by somebody who does not know anything of the problem, he would think that there is no crisis at all, then what is all this hue and cry about and why the people are demonstrating and agitating for the price already fixed and are being shot down also unfortunately. I would ask the Government not to hide from the House the magnitude of the crisis and tell us clearly what they are prepared to do to save the interests of the farmers. First and foremost, until the Tobacco Board is reconstituted and overhauled, the STC is the only agency which can step in and which must step in to see that purchases are made so that the farmers are not ruined.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, these are two topics which are, to some extent, interconnected. But each in its own right is an extremely important matter- policy of the Government regarding import of wheat and the cut in the subsidy of fertilisers.

The entire country has been rightly agitated by a sudden shift, what appears to be a shift in the policy of a Government which has always assured everybody that they have the interests of the farmers and the interests of agriculture primarily at heart and nothing will ever be done which is detrimental to the interests of the farmers. Sir, as citizens of this country, for the last few years, all of us have been proud to share the claim that after so many years, India has become self-sufficient in food and it is no longer necessary for us, as it was at one point of time, to go on depending on imports of foreign foodgrains, particularly wheat. We remember those years of PL-480 when we went on spending large amounts of foreign exchange year after year in order to purchase wheat from US. That period has passed. That was like a nightmare and we were able to stand up with our heads held high and say that at least, thanks to the boost in our production, Green Revolution, hard work of our farmers and other things. We have reached a stage where India is no longer depending on imports and we can say now quite proudly that we are self-sufficient in foodgrains. Now, all of a sudden- I do not know if it is really sudden but anyway the decision is sudden—we have to go in for substantial import of wheat. It began with one million tonnes but now, it has come to 2.5 million tonnes which is proposed to be imported from USA, Canada and Australia. The combined figure is 2.5 million tonnes. Sir, I wish Dr. Manmohan Singh was here because it appears to me that what is happening is the first taste that we are getting of the so-called global free trade of which Dr. Manmohan Singh is a big votary power and a champion and it is the basic philosophy, after all, of the western countries, of the World Bank and of the IMF that we must tie up our economy with the global economy and global free trade is something which we cannot opt out of. We cannot afford to indulge in luxuries like saying that we must be self-sufficient, self-reliant and try to stand on our feet and all that. These are

* Participating in the discussion under Rule 193 on Situation Affecting Agriculture and Farmers' Interests due to increase in prices of Fertilizers and Wheat Import; *L.S. Deb.*, 25 November 1992.

supposed to be all out-of-date ideas and theories and we must become integrated with this global free trade.

Now, what is happening here? We find from the picture of wheat position that actually we are facing a crisis and I suppose one can describe it only as a major crisis. Production is down, procurement is down and buffer stocks are down. I need not go on quoting Government figures here. Statistics are available. The question is why has the production gone down so much. We did not have any successive years of drought or anything. We had a good monsoon. Last year, we had a bumper harvest. At least, it was claimed that it was a bumper harvest. I do not know. In spite of that, production is stagnating. I would not say that it has declined very sharply but it has become stagnant. It is not growing. As a result of that, procurement has also gone down and buffer stocks have also gone down. I think, yesterday, the hon. Minister was saying that we are having to import because prices here have risen very high in the internal domestic market and in order to protect the consumers from these very high prices, we are having to import wheat so that prices can come down. I think, according to Press reports, when the Government first started thinking of importing wheat from USA, and perhaps was having some negotiations, they were hopeful that this US wheat would be supplied to us at subsidised rates. But then the world has changed. So many things have changed in the world. The balance of forces is changed and the United States is in no mood nowadays to supply subsidised food to countries whom they consider to be not part and parcel of their world design. The result is that the imported US wheat, which we are contracting for, is at the rate of somewhere between $163 and $205.

The landed cost of that works out to so much. Here again, somebody says that the landed cost works out to Rs. 424 per quintal and some people say that it would be Rs. 526 per quintal. The exact figures and calculations can be supplied by the Minister. The fact is that this price is far far higher, much higher than the price at which we are asking the farmer in our own country to supply wheat to the market or the Government for procurement purposes.

There was a rumour at one time—a couple of months ago—that the American attitude, rather a rigid and hard attitude, was due to its displeasure at the reported agreement or decision of the Indian Government to sell rice to Cuba, Cuba being a country against whom, the United States is practising a trade embargo for the last so many years. I do not know how many years—and trying to prevent any kind of food or other essential supplies from reaching Cuba. It is a political question. Later on it was made clear that the Government of India is not selling any rice to Cuba.

Whatever it may be, the decision of the cabinet taken on 15 January this year to import one million tonne of wheat, was the first decision in four

years. It was the first time that such a decision was taken in four years. The last time was in 1988. For the last four years, we have never imported any wheat from outside. And now, suddenly, this decision was taken by the Cabinet! That is no doubt that a lot of the wheat was being held back from the market in anticipation of getting a higher price later on. It was being held back by traders, by merchants—by hoarders in other words—and also perhaps by a section of farmers in the more prosperous areas of the country where they have got some holding capacity. There is nothing strange about this, because they were all calculating that later on they would be able to get a better price. So, they were holding on. I don't think the Government has been very vigorous or serious about trying to bring out any hoarded stocks. Some kind of anti-hoarding operations in some States were carried out, but they were very marginal. Most of the stuff which is being held back, leading to this rise in prices, was never tackled seriously. Rather, the Government has gone in for adopting softer option. The tough or difficult option would be to deal with the hoarders. The softer option is to go in for import, paying huge amounts of foreign exchange out, at the time when we have got an adverse trade balance, when everyday, the Finance Ministry is reminding us that there is a huge foreign exchange deficit. Why have they gone for a softer option of paying out huge amounts of foreign exchange in order to import wheat, despite this adverse trade balance and despite the fact that the wheat crop has been a good one and there has been good monsoon?

In 1991-92, the wheat procurement was 7.7 million tonne, that is, 3 million tonne less than in 1990-91. My question is 'Why?'. Why was it so much less? 3 million tonne less! Some explanation has to be given for that. On 1 January this year, the wheat in our buffer stock was 5.27 million tonne as against 9.20 million tonne on the same date last year. So, the buffer stocks are being seriously depleted. There has been a combination of speculation and hoarding, even of movement of foodgrains from one State to another—whether you call it smuggling or not, I do not know—but all this has combined to bring about such a situation. At the same time the Government has announced, that announcement was welcomed, that the Public Distribution network was going to be expanded and strengthened and a large number of PDS outlets in various States are going to be opened which would require an additional 4 million tonne of foodgrains. To feed the entire Public Distribution System, to keep it growing an additional 4 million tonne is required not perhaps only of wheat but of all foodgrains. At the same time last year some 6.5 lakh tonne of wheat was exported at Rs. 240 per quintal to some African and other countries. So, what I am saying, Sir, is that the whole policy appears to be paradoxical and it is full of all kinds of contradictions. We would like to know whether some different Departments and Sections inside the Government are working at cross purposes.

There was a headline report in the newspaper, which to my knowledge the Minister concerned has never contradicted, that the hon. Minister in charge of Agriculture and Food was in principle opposed to this large scale import of wheat. He is present here. He can clarify his position. I would like to know what has happened to the after-effects or aftermaths of the Green Revolution. Is it a time for second Green revolution? If so, what are you going to do about it? The fact remains that the production is declining. Since 1988, 54 million tonne to 56 million tonne is a sort of stagnant level at which the production of wheat remains today. The Government which no doubt has been very panicky, did not think of concrete measures to stimulate production. They cannot, of course, stimulate production also because they have raised the prices of fertilizers so much that all the farmers are suffering. These two are definitely interconnected. Because of this Fertilizer policy, not only production of wheat but production of so many other crops is going to suffer heavily. So, we have turned from a net exporter to an importer within less than two years. I think it is a matter of great concern. If this does not add up to a serious crisis what else does, please tell us.

I understand there is a problem as to how to satisfy the farmer and how to satisfy the consumers from the less affluent sections for whom the PDS is supposed to function. The issue price from the PDS shops has also been increased, I think three times, in the last couple of years. The prices of wheat; the prices of rice issued against the ration card, from the PDS shops, are also having to be put up. Why? I think it is because they say "We are giving higher procurement prices to the farmers". But, obviously those higher procurement prices are not adequate to stimulate the farmer to part with more grain. He is holding back because there is something wrong with the price policy. You can not expect a farmer to give you grain at a certain price when he knows that the price will rise in future. The imported wheat is being brought at much higher price which the Government is paying to the American grain companies. I think the immediate beneficiaries of this policy will not be either the Indian farmer or the Indian agriculture at all, but the immediate beneficiaries will be those people who will be involved in the import business, *viz.* importers, exporters, shipping companies, insurers, commission agents and brokers. So, they will of course be the immediate beneficiaries but not our farmers. They are going to lose heavily. And the Indian agriculture as a whole has received a body blow because you had not outlined any measure by which in the next couple of years, you are going to increase production sufficiently or to gear up your procurement machine.

So, Sir, as far as this matter is concerned, I very strongly condemn this policy of the Government which has turned upside down the course which we were following for the last few years. It is something which I think the whole community of farmers is up in arms against and will be more and more opposed to it.

Then, as far as fertilizers are concerned, this policy of de-control, again we are told, was against the advise of the Agriculture Ministry and against the advise of the Fertilizer Department. It has led to a steep rise in the prices of phosphatic and potassic fertilizers. Last year, when it was announced in this House, there was a general disapproval and opposition. It was assured here that as far as the poor and marginal farmers are concerned, they will continue to get the fertilizers at the previous price; the new price, as a result of removal of subsidies, will not affect the small and marginal farmers. But subsequently, reports came from everywhere that it is only on paper; in actual practice, the small and marginal farmers are also having to buy fertilizers at the new and enhanced price. That machinery does not exist. It does not work. You cannot implement the decision like that. Either you have to buy from the blackmarket or you have to buy at the original price and not at the renewed price or the enhanced price.

Now, I realise that after partial abolition of the subsidy, there is still quite a substantial subsidy remaining, deficit is remaining, and they will continue because of the condition of indigenous production of fertilizers and all that. All the public sector fertilizer companies are on the verge of closure. Shri P.A. Sangama is sitting here, he is tackling this problem as far as the labour side of it is concerned. Every public sector fertilizer undertaking, whether it is Sindhri or whether it is Gorakhpur or Durgapur or Barauni or whether it is FACT in Kerala which employ 10,000 people, are on the verge of closure. They are on the last gasp. Even the budgetary allocations which have been made for these companies, have either been withdrawn or have not been given in actual fact. So, the life is being squeezed out of these factories. Sometimes, they do not even have money to pay the salaries every month, let alone to buy raw materials and all that. This seems to be a calculated policy of the Government as far as public sector fertilizer concerns go. No doubt, this policy will help the private sector... I think, a Report was submitted by the Sub-Committee on Fertilizers—Committee on Public Undertakings—where there were some notes of dissent. It made it quite clear that the Members of the Committee were being pressurised in various ways to see that this policy was carried out which would directly lead to a closure of the public sector units.

Thousands of those workers are now, at this moment, at the Boat Club, demonstrating because their jobs are at stake; they have no job security left, they do not know how long these factories will be allowed to operate.

The private sector factories, of course, will gain, benefit, profit. But what will be the total picture of the fertiliser market? So, my plea is that the subsidy which was removed last year-after all these subsidies are not permanent things; they are temporary things; sometimes they are increased;

sometimes they can be lowered; sometimes they can be abolished; sometimes they can be restored-should be restored. But, at the present moment, the condition which has been created, I would plead for a restoration of the subsidy on fertilizers which was removed last year.

Don't do all these things together. It will deliver a body blow to the agriculture of this country. The combination of this, removal of subsidy plus this import of wheat, is going to deliver a crippling blow to the agriculture of our country and to the farmers. And what have they done to deserve this, we do not know. These are all things which are following from the policy now on liberalisation and global free trade and all that. Otherwise, how this thing has come about suddenly? The removal of subsidy, nobody hides the fact that it is a very strong prescription; and repeatedly that prescription is being administered by the World Bank. The President of the World Bank was here only the other day. They are repeating all the time that without further cut in your subsidy you cannot expect to get assistance from us. Now where that will stop, we do not know.

Now, it is subsidy on fertilizer. Subsidy on food has also begun to be cut in stages, which means the Public Distribution System will be affected, which is meant for the poorer sections of the people, not people sitting in this House, I am sure. You and I go and buy from the open market. We do not need to line up and stand in queues holding ration cards. But what about the other section of the community which is going to be hit by this constant rise in the issue price of things like wheat, sugar, rice, edible oil and all that? Therefore, these two matters must be treated as a single whole because they are the most important components of our agricultural systems as we have developed. One is fertilizer without which there would have been no Green Revolution. It was not due only to fertilizer, I know; it was a combination of fertilizer, good seeds and water and all that. But fertilizer is a very essential part of it and you are removing it and making it go beyond the reach of every average farmer. Secondly, by importing wheat at these prices, half of which even you are not prepared to give to our own farmers, why should we pay this money, this foreign exchange to these American big grain companies, I do not know.

We can build up our production. We have done it already. Even two years ago, it was not necessary to think of import any more. We were in a position to feed our people. It is a different matter that a large section of our people do not have the purchasing capacity to buy even this subsidised food. It is a fact, all those who are living below the poverty line and so on. But that is another problem; and we have to deal with it separately how to increase the purchasing capacity of those people. But the fact is that whatever offtake is there was coming directly from our own domestic production; and it was

not necessary to go on saying that there is a shortfall and therefore we have to bring in grains from outside.

Therefore, I strongly condemn this policy of the Government. I demand two things. One is that the fertilizer subsidy cut should be restored. Fertilizer production in this country should not be allowed to go down. Public sector fertilizer plants should not be allowed to be closed down; they should be rehabilitated; they should be revived with the help of the management and the workers, both who are prepared to cooperate in this matter.

And as far as wheat is concerned, this contract which is being signed, I feel it is a thin end of the wedge; this is not the first contract that is going to be signed. This should be reviewed; it must be reconsidered. And I think a senior and veteran farmer like Dr. Balram Jakhar pits himself also rightly on the back that he is such an experienced farmer. I do not know how this thing he is following. It should go against his very grain, that this Government having reached a stage of self-sufficiency should now have to go and again beg for foodgrains from America, mind you, on their terms, on terms which they are in a position to dictate. This is our ill advised policy, totally against the interest of Indian agriculture and Indian farmer and the whole matter should be reconsidered.

I hope that the Prime Minister, the Food Minister and others who always claim that they have to make themselves free, they have to liberate themselves from whatever grip is on them, in the interest of our own country, that will be done. Otherwise we are in for some very hard times and agriculture and farmers in this country are going to suffer for no fault of their own, may be due to wrong policies here which are suffering from dictation by foreign agencies and that is not the thing which we can reconcile ourselves to.

The economic policy of this country must be determined freely by our own sovereign country, by our own dependent Government and not to be dictated by foreign agencies.

This is all I have to say. I hope that the House will support the idea of reversing these disastrous policies which the Government have undertaken.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, sir, listening to the Food Minister while moving his motion, one got the impression that this was just one of those years when the rains had failed a little more than perhaps in other years. That is all the sense of urgency which he lent to his remarks on this crisis. I was, Sir, the other day, looking at a foreign journal, which made, rather, what I thought was, an uncharitable remark about Indians and India—a Western journal, of course. It stated: "We are getting tired of hearing this annual belly-ache about failure of rains from India". Of course, the "belly-ache" may be a little more acute this year, I agree, because there has been very severe drought; but I would suggest to the Food Minister that this debate should not be restricted and confined, as it was sought to be confined, mainly within the limits of a short-term crisis, the crisis due to failure of rains or drought this year, because it is really a national problem, it is not only a short-term but really a long-term problem that has to be tackled.

Now, sir, I do not wish to spend any time really on taking up the problems of individual States. I fear that the debate will generally tend to move on the lines of problems of particular States. Recently, the Hindustan Times of Shri Birla, has been publishing a whole series of articles on the food situation, one article for each State and, if I may just read out the headlines, they give an idea of the depth of the crisis, depth of the problem. This is what they say: "Years of neglect ....."—it is not about just the present problem—"Years of neglect give U.P. poor harvests"; "Drought shows up lopsided planning in the Punjab"; "Mysore's crash programmes need more funds"; "Maharashtra's major problem is in Vidarbha"—that, of course, is mainly the drought problem, I think—"Andhra Pradesh faces a deficit of 25 per cent"—a very prosperous State by all accounts—"Rajasthan's hope pinned on hoarded stocks"—I presume it means "pinned on un-hoarding hoarded stocks—"Bihar bungles despite large outlay"—the Minister remembers, no doubt, the conditions which prevailed there in last July and August when rice prices went up to Rs. 75.00 per maund and drove the people to take to certain forms of agitation whose repurcussion is still present there in the State of Bihar and hundreds of people are still in jail—"Madras....."—the Food Minister's own State—"Madras can tide over crisis if it rains now"; "Madhya Pradesh a victim of drought and

* Participating in the discussion on the Motion regarding Food Situation & Drought Conditions in the Country; *L.S. Deb.*, 1 December 1965.

price bungle"; "Bengal....."— the Minister's model State — "Bengal fails to use its resources fully"; "Little hope of raising Kerala's loan ration'—these are the headlines that Shri Birla's paper gives regarding the position in each of the States. Now, this drought that has overtaken the country, together with the uncertainty of wheat supplies under PL 480, certainly creates a situation which applies to the coming year. But Shri Subramaniam*, in his opening remarks, probably anticipating the attack that was going to be made by the Swatantra Party members here, very strongly advocated the cause of State trading and monopoly procurement by the State and he launched into a very severe criticism of free trade, free market and what the record of free market has been. Of course, I am at one with him. But I would like to ask him what happened last year, in 1964-65, when by all accounts we had a very good crop, what was described as a bumper crop. What had happened to that? Where did the crop go? Why did the price rise higher than ever in the past so far? And we know that last year when the good bumper crop was being harvested the same question was asked as to what the procurement policy of the Government was going to be and the Government was a house divided on this question. I would like to know in that divided house on which side was the Food Minister. Who is responsible—I do not hold this against him personally—for the fact that last year, in 1964-65, a year of good harvest, of admitted bumper crop, the whole of the crop was allowed to pass into the hands of the free market, the big hoarders, profiteers and blackmarketeers to be merry with it, and today when we meet with a situation where drought has overtaken us we have no stocks, Government has no buffer stock or anything to fall back upon? I say these things only for this reason that we are being assured by the Government, from the Prime Minister downwards, that very decisive measures are going to be taken on an emergency footing. And some military language is also being used, in keeping with the present atmosphere, like food will be put on a war footing, the food front has to be mobilised, ploughs are no less important then swords and guns and so on. Very good. When all these terms are being used, we feel a little difficult to rely simply on the assurances and promises because of the recent experience that we have had regarding this Government.

Now, much is being said about the need for sacrifices because we are in for a very difficult time. Appeals are being issued for sacrifices, for missing meals, for consuming less; we have been told that if consumption is reduced a little bit, if there is a marginal decrease in consumption, it will mean that we will be able to tide over the worst period and so on. I would like to know to whom these appeals are addressed. I would like to know whether they are addressed to the 35 crores an odd of people in the rural countryside who, as

*Referring to Shri C. Subramaniam, the then Union Minister of Food and Agriculture.

we know, have an average per capita income of 68 paise per day, mention of which was made in this House more than once. Or is this appeal to miss a meal or reduce the consumption addressed to 10 crores of people whose average income is 42 paise? Or is it being addressed to one crore of people whose average income is 27 paise per day? To whom is this appeal for sacrifice addressed? The Minister must realise that there is a vast population, mainly in the countryside, who have got no margin on which they can fall back upon. What is to be done about them?

It has been said by somebody that the Indian farmer is really the poorest industrialist in this country today. If you consider agriculture to be an industry, he is the poorest industrialist because he is condemned to employ the costliest capital. He has to borrow money at rates ranging anything from 25 to 100 per cent. I would like to ask Shri P.K. Deo*, or anybody else, whether any of the leading industrialists in this country, be it Shri Tata or Shri Birla to whom the Punjab Government has given 1,000 acres of land in Ambala district to go in for joint stock farming, is any of these gentlemen prepared to operate these things successfully by borrowing at these rates of interest at which the Indian farmers are borrowing? On top of that, these gentlemen who are nowadays advocating joint stock farming—Shri Kirloskar of the FICCI made a speech, I think in Kanpur, in which he has also suggested to his colleagues of the private sector that they should go in for joint stock farming—they are demanding that the Government should give them land, water, electricity, seed, fertilizer, etc. Everything must be provided to them and then they will enter the scene with great managerial and entrepreneurial skill and produce and make India into a land of plenty. How is the farmer who is borrowing at rates of interest ranging from 50 to 100 per cent expected to solve this crisis by sacrifice or by doing a little more hard work?

I think the priorities are upside down. Somebody just now mentioned the need for increasing *taccavi* and co-operative loans. The record shows that even the co-operative loans ultimately go primarily to that section which has got some substantial security to offer. These co-operative loans do not go to the poor peasant, whose need is the most, but who probably has no adequate security to offer.

Now I may say a word about the West Bengal Government because Shri Subramaniam has gone even to the length of saying that the whole future of our food policy and planning will really turn on the success or failure of the experiment which is being made in West Bengal. Well, as said repeatedly, we welcome it fully and we want to co-operate with any proper policy of monopoly procurement and rationing. We want that rationing should

*Referring to Shri P.K. Deo, MP

be extended in the coming years to all towns with a population of one lakh or more. There should be statutory rationing in towns with modified rationing and control of supplies in the countryside. But I must point out that the West Bengal Government has set about this monopoly procurement plan in such a way, its outlook is such, the procedure it has adopted is such that I doubt very much whether the co-operation of the farmers will be forthcoming. I do not think that the scheme can succeed on the basis of coercion; it can succeed only on the basis of co-operation. I would request Shri Subramaniam to find out what is the mechanism by which these rates of levy which have been declared by the West Bengal Government have been calculated. Well, I have no time to go into the details but I find—and I am sure he will find too if he examined it thoroughly—that the levy has been calculated in such a way that firstly no allowance is made for the differing yields per acre in different districts and different areas of the States and the same flat rate of levy is being imposed on all lands, irrespective of their capacity to yield. Secondly, it has been stated that after calculating what the peasant requires for his own consumption, his family consumption, the balance will be treated as marketable surplus and the whole of it will be purchased by the State agencies. But in West Bengal if you go into the details of the calculation you will find that the levy has been graded in such a way that the smaller peasants and the middle class peasants are expected to give to the Government selling agencies so much of their paddy that actually there will be a shortfall in their own requirements for the year, whereas in the case of the bigger peasants, the richer peasants or big landlords who are called *jotdars* in West Bengal the amount which is to be levied from them will still leave a surplus beyond their requirements, and that surplus will surely again be diverted to the black market and sold at high prices or hoarded. If that is the way in which this is going to be done, then I am afraid a great deal of resistance and opposition will grow and the whole scheme may flounder. Therefore, he should please look into this; because he says that the whole of the future policy of the country is going to hinge on this, I have got great doubts as to how far it will succeed if this kind of inequitable levy system is going to be imposed.

Then, he waxed eloquent about the success of the statutory rationing scheme in Calcutta. But just on the fringe of that area, literally on the fringe, in the industrial areas of greater Calcutta and nearby, which is just outside the statutory rationing zone, what is happening? Rice is not available even at Rs. 2.50 or 3 per kilo in the open market. I received a telegram yesterday from one of the big jute mills situated in Howrah in Bauria, Fort Gloster Jute Mills, which employs 8,000 men. They have stated in this telegram that because rice is selling at Rs. 2.65 per kilogram in that area and it is not available in sufficient quantities, the workers are not able to maintain production on

multiple machines and the production has fallen and the management has declared a lockout in the mills. This kind of thing is happening. Even industrial production is being affected.

So, the point I wish to make here is that we must go to the root cause of this crisis. It is not enough just to think out some immediate measures for tackling the problem of drought this year.

As far as imports from abroad are concerned, we had a debate the other day and I was very sorry to hear the Food Minister that day, losing his temper and attacking us on this side of the House, ascribing political motives even. But I have to taken up one point about that again because the crisis is intensifying every day. Does not the hon. Minister think that it is time that at least the Government should stop deluding the country into believing that these PL-480 supplies come to us without any expense in foreign exchange because it is simply not true? The foreign exchange cost of PL-480 must be understood. It is not easy to see on the surface, but it is there, 12.8 per cent of the counterpart funds are exclusively reserved for United States authorities' use in this country. He knows that 6.8 per cent of these counterpart funds are specified or earmarked for Indo-American collaboration for the use of private sector concerns in this country under the Cooley Amendment authority. These two items have been calculated at working out to about Rs. 60 crore per year. Rs. 1 crore of these counterpart funds have recently been earmarked for use by American tourists coming to this country to be used in place of dollars. Shipping freight is going to cost us Rs. 40 crore per year. I believe, there is also now a new proposal for a further 3.5 per cent of these counterpart funds to be converted into foreign currencies exclusively for American use. Altogether, you can calculate and find out, this works out to about Rs. 110 crore per year which is spent in foreign exchange, which would work out to Rs. 550 crore roughly during the whole Fourth Plan period, which works out to about 14 per cent of the entire foreign aid component of that Plan. So, this is what it is costing us. We must remember that too. That is why our spokesman, Professor Mukerjee,* during that debate, wanted to impress so strongly the need for ending our dependence or over dependence on these PL-480 wheat supplies.

As the figures of annual imports show, we are not moving towards self-sufficiency. We are moving in a reverse direction, away from self-sufficiency, even allowing for the increase in population. Your Professor Dantwala**, who is not a Communist, as I hope, also has calculated—I would like to quote, but it would take time—that the growth in population is only slightly

*Referring to Shri Hirendra Nath Mukerjee, MP.

**Referring to Professor M.L. Dantwala, renowned agricultural economist.

more, proportionately, than the growth in foodgrains production over these years. So, it is not as though the growth in population has far outstripped the rate of growth of food production.

What are the figures of imports? In the five years preceding the First Plan we imported 2.65 million tonnes per year. During the First Plan we imported 2.42 million tonnes. It went down a bit. In the Second plan it went up to 3.41 million tonnes. In the first four years of the Third Plan it has gone up to 4.44 million tonnes. So, we are moving in the reverse direction.

The point is that this imported grain only allows us to increase the per capita availability from 13.2 ounces per day to 14.5 ounces per day. Only 1.3 ounces per day is the addition to our availability as a result of this very expensive import programme which we have got.

Now I will just go through a few other points. It is our contention that the root of the matter is not being tackled. The root of the matter is, first of all, an administrative problem. I do not understand how this food crisis can be tackled by an outmoded administrative system under which seven or eight Ministries of the Central Government are involved in this matter. Agricultural production, fertilisers, water, that is to say, irrigation, tractors, community development, finance for credit purposes—the whole thing is spread over seven or eight Ministries and on top of that there is the States' problem. Everyone of the State Governments, the majority of whom, I think, are not very much in favour of the activities of the Food Trading Corporation.

Therefore, I would suggest to the Minister that if they really want to live up to their words about tackling this problem on a war footing, the first thing to be done, even though it means an unconventional step and breaking through the orthodox ways of thinking to which we have grown accustomed, is that some re-organisation must be done so that a high-powered, unified, single Department of Agricultural Production is set up which can break through all these 101 obstacles and barriers. Much talk of sacrifices is going on. Why not make a little sacrifice of all these ministerial empires? It may involve a little bit of sacrifice here and there. Some re-organisation will have to be done so that this whole thing is brought under a unified command.

At the moment what we call inputs in agriculture are all scattered, compartmentalised into ten Ministries. If one gets water in one place, he will not get a tractor there; if one gets a tractor somewhere else, he will not get fertilisers there, because all the Ministries and Ministers are different. All that Shri Subramaniam can offer us is some agricultural production board which, he says, is attempting to bring about a co-ordination. No co-ordination will come about like that.

If this is a period of emergency when we are battling for our life for self-reliance, then I would suggest to the Government that they take some emergent measures to set up that kind of unified department of agricultural production which can really win the battle on the food front.

Secondly, on the question of joint stock farms that it is impossible to apply scientific and modern methods to small holdings. Therefore, I find the FICCI Chairman also advocating that all land ceilings must be scrapped, all land reform laws must be scrapped and so on. I do not know whether it is an indication of Government's thinking that they agree to some extent with this, judging from what is being done in the Punjab, namely, giving 1,000 acres of land to Shri Birla. I am told, in Madhya Pradesh also he is trying to get hold of an even bigger area of land. But this is a fallacy because, as far as we know, in Japan the average size of holdings is, if anything, even smaller than in India, but their productivity, the paddy yield, as we know, is probably among the highest in the world; in some cases, it has even gone up to 100 maunds per acre. Whereas in India we use 1.3 kilogram of fertiliser per acre, Japan uses 94 kilograms of fertiliser per acre. So, it is not necessarily a question whether the holding is small or big; it is the question of intensive effort that can be put in with the assistance of Government which can yield much higher rates of production.

I would like to say that if really a demonstration is needed, I support the idea that a demonstration is also needed side by side with this of modern techniques applied on a large scale to big farms. I agree with that; but why should that be done, under the aegis of Shri Birla? Why should not State farms be set up in that case? Shri Subramaniam remembers that it was, I think, Mr. Khrushchev* or somebody else who, at the time of the Suratgarh project, had remarked that if 100 Suratgarhs are set up in India, it would break the back of India's food crisis. Prime Minister Pandit Nehru also, I think, echoed that sentiment some time.

I read in the papers the other day that during Shri Krishnamachari's** visit to Moscow and his talks with Mr. Kosygin*** there was a slight mention of it, that they discussed the question of mechanized farms too. I do not know what the details of the discussion are, but I would ask Shri Subramaniam, if it is necessary to demonstrate, side by side with helping these small individual medium sized farmers to develop their lands, the possibilities and potentialities of modern techniques on a big scale, why they should not, if not have 100 Suratgarhs, at least set up one big State farm in the public sector in each State. There is plenty of waste, fallow land lying about. I am told, 932 lakh acres of total cultivable land is lying waste and the

* Referring to Mr. Nikita Khrushchev, the premier of the Soviet Union in 1964.

** Referring to Shri T.T. Krishnamachari, the then Minister of Finance.

*** Referring to Mr. Alexey Kosygin, the then premier of the Soviet Union.

landlords' land lying fallow is 528 lakh acres. Somebody says that Suratgarh has been a failure. It may be. I would like to have a proper assessment. This House has never been presented with a proper objective assessment of results of Suratgarh. I also believe it has not been much of a success but there are reasons for it. First of all, the site selected was wrong and it was being mismanaged. I say, if the Soviet Union or any other country is prepared to give assistance by way of mechanised equipment and so on, why not we set up one big State farm in each State at least and see how that develops?

The last question I would come to is the question of land reforms. I want to know—I hope the Minister will tell us when he replies to the debate—what has happened to that Report of Mr. Wolf Ladejinsky* which was submitted to the Government, I think sometime in 1963. Why has that Report been virtually suppressed?

*** *** ***

The recommendations made by Mr. Ladejinsky, as far as I know, were extremely modest. They could not be described as radical land reforms at all. All he suggested was a ban on resumptions of land, a proper preparation of land records which does not exist in our country, lower rents in cash and abolition of crop sharing. That is all he suggested. That was the kernel of his recommendations. Even on those lines no action has been taken. Now, we find that it is quite impossible, I think, to enthuse and inspire the peasantry, the farmers of our country, unless some radical land reforms are implemented. The Government is pledged to that; the Congress Party is pledged to that. They passed resolutions some years ago and put them away in the cold storage. Unless the implementation is carried out and unless special measures are also taken on an emergent footing to provide cheap credit to the farmers, the results will not be achieved. The State Bank of India pledged, when it was formed, that they would open at least 400 or 500 branches in rural areas. Even that is not being done. Today, we find that cooperative credit accounts for not more than at the most 15 per cent of the total outstanding agricultural loans, the rural indebtedness 85 per cent is still owing to the private money-lenders, the traders and these elements, who are charging exorbitant rates of interest. How does the State come to the help of the peasant? Even that is being grossly sabotaged and neglected by the Government. Therefore, these measures have to be taken. Otherwise, there is no use in calling upon the people to work harder because it is not physically possible to do that. 20 per cent of our rural households do not own any land at all at the moment—as you know, that is the finding of the Mahalanobis Committee—whereas 5 per cent of the households own 40 per cent of the land so that a sort of monopoly of land-ownership is still there. That is not being broken up despite all the

* Referring to Mr. Wolf Ladejinsky, who took part in a major World Bank study of India's prospects for economic development in early 1960s.

plethora of legislation that has taken place. This is a reality. 70 per cent of the holdings are still below the national average of 6.64 acres. This is the pattern of our agriculture and land distribution. Therefore, it is essential that long-term measures of an emergent nature of a radical nature, are undertaken. Otherwise, it is not possible to go forward and all the Minister's plans of building up buffer stock, of monopoly procurement and rationing being extended, all of which are very good principles which we support, will not be implemented. They will fail and, therefore, it is necessary to go to the root of the problem.

Even as regards the drought affected areas, the measures which have been outlined by the Minister include a lot of things—some of them may be quite good—but there is nothing said, say, for example, that in the drought-affected areas, remissions of land revenue will be given to the people who are affected there. If there are any outstanding loans in any drought-affected area, will he agree to write off those loans in that distressed area? I do not know .....

*** *** ***

To sum up, the problem is still being tinkered with. It is being avoided in the sense that the seriousness and the gravity of the crisis is being regarded here only as a short-term thing. Therefore, I would finally say that Government must pluck courage and break away with some of the past predilections and habits and its weakness for the big traders has definitely to go. Otherwise, none of the plans can succeed.

Even now, the Reserve Bank figures show that this year the advances made by the scheduled banks against foodgrains and food articles have gone up to very high figures from Rs. 93.64 crore in January this year to Rs. 172.22 crore in May. It is with this money, these advances made by the scheduled banks, that all the large-scale hoarding, profiteering and speculation in foodgrains goes on. It is no use saying that the Reserve Bank is taking certain control measures on the scheduled banks. It is not working. Therefore, these banks should be nationalised and alternative means of credit to peasants should be provided.

In conclusion, I say, because the Minister has asked for our cooperation, we are certainly prepared to cooperate if the proper democratic policies on the basis of which the people's cooperation—not our cooperation only—down below in the fields is harnessed are followed. But if behind the clock of brave words which we have heard many times, ultimately step by step the retreat takes place and surrender is made again to the big landlords and the big traders, then certainly we are not prepared to give our cooperation, come what may, and in that case we will have to face the battle for food because our people have to survive at all costs.

LONG TERM MEASURES FOR DROUGHT RELIEF*

During these rather turbulent days which we had in the House in the beginning of this Session, some members remarked once or twice that it was a pity in their opinion, that the House was spending so much time and wasting so much time, according to them, on issues like Bofors and so on when so many more important and vital matters affecting millions of people in this country like drought, were not given sufficient attention. Well, I could agree with them. Now, I am rather disappointed to find that when this discussion on drought has come, many of those members who were vociferous about it, seem to be conspicuous by their absence.

*** *** ***

My own impression is that, that statement and subsequently some other statements and actions of the Government in this connection, seem to me to reveal a certain lack of urgency. And I do not think, they are yet willing to admit the seriousness of the situation. I know that this point of mine can be replied to. This is a debate after all. Somebody can reply by saying that we do not want to create an atmosphere of panic and this and that. It is not a question of panic. The fact of the matter is that perhaps the worst drought in hundred years, seems to be overtaking the country. We know from past experience that the drought of this magnitude is not something whose effects will be confined only to the present or a few months, but a drought of this magnitude is likely to have long term effects, long-term adverse consequences for the entire national economy, apart from the sufferings that it brings to the people. Therefore, it is a very serious matter. And it is rather regrettable to find—after all in a few days' time, we will be celebrating 40 years of our Independence—that after 40 years of planned economic development, the country's fortunes seem to remain at the mercy of mother nature. This is a sad commentary on the way the Government, over all these years has managed the water resources of this country.

As the Minister has stated the other day, out of 35 meteorological circles or zones in which they divide the country, only 10 of these zones have had more or less normal rainfall. The other 25 zones are afflicted by a very serious drought. We know that some of these States can be described as drought

* Participating in the discussion on the drought situation in the country; *L.S. Deb.*, 10 August 1987.

prone. They have a sort of chronic malady of drought from year to year like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh etc.. There are some States which are flood-prone, particularly in the eastern part of India. Equally there are States which are drought prone. I named some of them just now.

This year, it is not only the drought prone States but other areas and particularly the north-western zone, which is considered the granary of this country, which is the largest foodgrain producer of this country—Punjab and Haryana is also seriously affected. In this area of Punjab and Haryana we know that agriculture is very well developed. The farmers are using a great deal of power for their pumpsets. They are very much electricity oriented. Energised irrigation system is there, which has led to very good results in past years. But this time, the Bhakra Dam on which these areas are mainly dependent for their power, according to the reports I find, is holding at the moment 50 per cent less water than that of last year. The water has gone down by 50 per cent. In 47 major reservoirs in the country today, there is 30 per cent less water than there was in July last year. And the overall level of water in the reservoirs in the country, if you take the average, is down by 10 to 12 per cent. Uttar Pradesh, Himachal, where there has also been great scarcity of rainfall, and even some parts of Kerala are affected this year.

*** *** ***

Out of 416 districts in the country, about 67 per cent, that is 280 districts are affected. The corresponding figure in the drought conditions of 1985 was only 187. So, the affected area is increasing in each successive drought and that is a very serious matter which we have to think about. That is why I said that the long-term husbanding and management of water resources in our country is obviously not up to the mark. There are other Asian countries like Japan, like China, like Korea which have husbanded and managed their water resources, I should say, much more effectively than we in India have been able to do. There is a report that two million drought-stricken people who are now engaged in what is known as relief works, who have been given employment on relief works in Rajasthan, have not been paid their wages for the past two months. So, starvation is bound to follow. Migration of people from the worst affected areas has begun in search of work. There are some areas in our country from which whole families migrate every year in search of work, even when there is no drought. Their plight this year, one can well imagine. Cattle are also being moved from one area to another area in a desperate search for fodder and water.

The drought is bound to lead to a fall in foodgrains production, and a fall in foodgrains production is bound to lead to a rise in prices of agrarian products—whether it is vegetables or foodgrains or pulses or edible oils,—

to a lack of fodder, and now, as we are experiencing even in Delhi, to a crisis of milk supplies. Apart from the rise in prices of milk, there is an absolute scarcity of milk developing because of the lack of fodder for the animals. Rice sowing has been adversely affected in West Bengal, in U.P., in East Madhya Pradesh, in Nagpur. The production of pulses in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh is badly affected, as also the production of oilseeds in Saurashtra and even the production of cotton, jute and so on.

The water table or the subsoil water, as we all know, has gone down considerably over the years. This is one of my complaints against the Government, that though it was known over the years that this subsoil water table is going down very rapidly, no long term programmes were undertaken in order to see that this subsoil water is properly tapped. There is an acute shortage of drinking water, apart from rural areas, even in urban areas. The worst example probably is the city of Madras where you are considered to be lucky if you can buy a bucket of water everyday for Rs. five or Rs. ten. If this drought continues, I am told the inhabitants of Madras city will really be in a condition of acute drinking water scarcity.

Consumption of diesel oil may have to go up. The Government has already given some direction that diesel and electricity should be diverted, as far as possible, to agricultural operations. It means that the consumption of diesel may go up and, therefore, larger imports may be necessary in the coming years. And certainly larger imports of edible oil which we were cutting down on, we had begun to cut down on, but now larger imports of edible oil, of cotton and so on will become necessary, which will strain again our foreign exchange resources, which are anyhow under constraint.

Industrial production is in danger of being hampered by lack of adequate power. If the power is mainly to be diverted to agricultural operations, there will be a demand recession in some industries in this situation and those industries which are dependent on agricultural raw materials for their production, they will also be affected. One of the Deputy Governors of the Reserve Bank of India, Shri C. Rangarajan, has said that 1% fall in agricultural production leads to a 2% fall in industrial production. They are so inter-linked. There will have to be larger expenditure. I hope the Minister will tell us about this larger expenditure on relief schemes, on relief works. How much, we do not know? Could it amount to say upto Rs. 1000 crore and will this also not lead naturally to Budget deficit in all the affected States and may be in the Center also?

The public distribution system will be called upon to supply at least an extra three to four million tonne this year. That is apart from the foodgrains released under the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) or other

relief programmes which will also become essential. We are told that there are buffer stocks, ample buffer stocks of about $23^1/_2$ million tonne of different types of foodgrains and so there is nothing to be alarmed about. These buffer stocks may be sufficient to tide over this year's crisis. That may be. But what is more important—that this demand and supply management should be efficiently handled. If it is not efficiently handled, then a part of these buffer stocks will find their way in to the black market and will not reach actually the poorest people, who are in need of it and also that will generate new inflationary pressure. How are these extra resources, but necessary resources, going to be raised? I do not know the Government mind. If they want to avoid further inflationary pressure in the economy, if they do not want to go in for further deficit financing, if they do not want to exceed this year's budgetary deficit estimate of Rs. 5600 crore, which was presented here in February last, then they must give us some indication and the country some indication, whether they are thinking of any other methods, or any other measures, of raising the necessary resources.

I do not want to take much of your time. The Cabinet has apparently set up some kind of a Panel of Ministers, with the Prime Minister as the Chairman, to work out some priority plan or emergency plan to meet this situation. But we do not know anything about the details of what they have worked out. In any case I am firmly of the opinion that a Panel of Cabinet Ministers or some other committee of officials and so on is not adequate. It is not an adequate measure with which to tackle such a widespread drought which is going to affect millions of people. For this, it is necessary to enlist the cooperation and the help of other people outside the Government also—various public organizations, even of various political parties who are not willing to set aside their political differences on other questions. But on this question to come together, in order mainly to bring relief to the people and to see that the relief is properly administered and reaches them, about that the Government has not said anything so far.

Now, I would say that some measures are necessary immediately. One is of course that immediate relief measures must be undertaken for providing three things. One is work to the unemployed in those areas, the second is fodder for the livestocks and the third is drinking water. Without these three, large numbers of people will not be able to survive.

Naturally, talking about the poorer sections, particularly in the rural areas, they must be provided with work and for that work, they must be paid the minimum wages which had been notified by the respective Governments. They must be paid those wages and not sought to be paid sub-standard wages or perhaps as in the case of Rajasthan, no wages at all. And the Government of India must give liberal grants to the State Governments which

are undertaking relief measures on a large scale. Many State Governments have already approached the Centre and many Chief Ministers at least have approached—from what we read in the papers—some asking for Rs. 100 crore, some others asking for Rs. 188 crore and so on. So, in any case, the State Governments have to bear the main brunt of organising the relief measures in an effective way with popular participation. But the Centre must be liberal in giving them grants in order to carry out this work.

Secondly, in the affected areas I would suggest that all agricultural loans and land revenue which are payable, particularly by the small farmers, marginal farmers and the agricultural labour in these affected areas, should be waived. Thirdly, the public distribution system does not work very satisfactorily. There have been many discussions and criticisms on other occasions in this House. But during this drought situation, the public distribution system must be geared up and the Government must provide essential commodities at subsidised rates to the people in the drought affected areas.

Fourthly, I would request the Government to see that all on-going irrigation projects are completed expeditiously. There are so many on-going irrigation projects on paper which make absolutely snail's progress and many of them which should have been completed long-long ago are still in the process of construction. Now, in a time like this which is a time of emergency, practically, the Government should see to it and take steps to see that all on-going irrigation projects are completed speedily. All surface water and subsoil water resources should be tapped. The Minister of Water Resources, I think, should also be a participant in this discussion because we would like to know what they are doing. There is a total failure of mobilisation of the water resources of this country.

Some depots should be opened for stocking and storing fodder. This is a very serious matter. Without fodder, thousands of herds of cattle and livestocks are going to perish. You know what the consequence will be for the farmers and for our agricultural operations.

I would demand that the supply of power for agricultural operations and agricultural services, for some time at least should be at 50% of the normal rates. Lastly, there is no doubt of the fact which is mentioned so often in speeches and articles and journals that these floods and droughts which are increasing in our country are basically due to a distortion of the ecological balance. And this ecological balance is being mainly disturbed and destroyed by this large scale denudation of forests, large-scale felling of forests. In some cases, as in Himachal Pradesh, this year because of the indiscriminate felling of trees in the forests on the hill-side, for which many types of people,

contractors and big official and other people are responsible. There is this terrible situation now in Himachal Pradesh. But there are areas where denudation of forests has been going on year after year and the result is what we are now seeing. The Government, the Prime Minister—not only the present but the previous Prime Minister—have spoken very vehemently against this practice of indiscriminate tree felling and destruction of forests. There are members here who are very much interested in this problem of environment and ecology, who speak about this from time to time. But we do not find any concrete steps being taken, any strict measures being taken to stop this indiscriminate felling of trees or taking punitive action against the people responsible for it, who are doing it for their own profit. So, forests are being destroyed; they are not being replaced by new green vegetation, which also the Government should have a long-term plan for. And because of this ecological devastation which is taking place, there is likelihood of future droughts and floods increasing several fold. I would like to know whether the Government has any plan for this. We are going to plant some trees, here outside the Parliament House Annexe. It is very good. But the drought and floods are not coming here. What about stopping the denudation of forest which is going on in a reckless, wanton and criminal manner, I should say, in various parts of the country? There is no plan or programme or any effective measure for the new planting of trees or of other green vegetation. Scientists have said that if we go on like this, in another 15 to 20 years, the forest will be reduced to such a condition that in our country, we may go on looking up to the sky at the Heavens and praying for rain or whatever it is. That is all the poor farmers can do now. It is because we are at the mercy of nature. But nothing will help or nothing will stop the devastation which is going to come. Therefore, I would plead for this, along with other immediate relief measure. It is the long-term measure of husbanding of water resources and husbanding of various resources and the building of irrigation projects within a time-bound frame, which are absolutely essential. Without that, I am sure, that we are in for a serious trouble, this year and next year. The effects of this will be felt next year also. It is for the Government to satisfy the House and the country that they are aware of the urgency of the situation and do not satisfy themselves simply by setting up a panel of some Ministers and saying that this is going to solve the problem. I do not believe it. This is a question on which the entire country should be mobilised and help should be taken, cooperation should be taken from all sections of people, from all organisations, public organisations and Parties which are willing to work together in order to save our people and the country.

I do not think that this debate today is one in which we should look at the situation from the point of view of particular States only... but the point is that we have had this subject raised in this House almost every day by members belonging to one State or the other. The total picture that is presented to us is that every single deficit State has today been reduced to a plight, where it has to come with a begging bowl in hand to the hon. Food Minister, not to meet its minimum requirements; that is not the point; we have been reduced to a plight where we have to come and complain and shout everytime that that amount of food which has been promised by the hon. Minister himself as the possible allocation from the Centre to that State is not being given. That is something far short of the minimum requirement. That is the position; that is the real agony of the situation today.

My hon. friend,** Shri Deshmukh, spoke about the shame of begging for food and thought it is very derogatory to our self-respect, we have been reduced by the Central Government to that plight where we have to come and say that for the next two months at least when the worst period is upon us, you will have to do whatever is possible, whether you beg, borrow, buy or steal—we do not care; not the minimum requirements of our States but the minimum allocations which are accepted by you has got to be given. It is no use here repeating what is the condition of each of the States which is so badly affected. Most of them have non-Congress Governments which came to power at the end of the harvest season. The harvest season was over. The grain had passed from the hands of the peasants into those of the traders. It was virtually impossible to go in for any effective procurement. The next harvest is yet to come. In this interim period, these States are faced with this crisis and they have to come here and say: At least stick to the promise you made, if you cannot do more than that—that is all.

You have heard the story of Kerala where ration shops have been closed. A storm is brewing there. Even in Bihar, the State from which the hon. Minister comes, the two lakh tonne which were promised have not been supplied. In U.P., the quota promised has not been fulfilled in any single month. In Assam and in Manipur, the same situation exists. In Manipur I am told that in the

* Participating in the discussion on the Motion on food situation in the country; *L.S. Deb.*, 7 August 1967.

**Referring to Shri Shivaji Rao S. Deshmukh, MP.

modified ration area in the countryside, people do not get even that one kilo of rice and one kilo of wheat per month, not per week, which they are supposed to get. In Assam, their quota has been cut down, and something which was earmarked for Assam was suddenly diverted somewhere else.

In Bengal, the same situation prevails. I believe the Ministers are in Delhi now asking these people somehow to help them to tide over at least the next two months after which they will try their own procurement from the *aus* crop, which is coming to harvest in the State. So we find the same story everywhere.

This afternoon in the city of Calcutta, a big demonstration is taking place, composed entirely of women, housewives who have come out of their houses, many of them with babies in their arms, marching to the Regional Food Directorate of the Central Government to demonstrate there.

Just now, reference was made to wastage and rotting of food lying in the King George Dock sheds in Calcutta, about which news has appeared in the papers. For five months that food was not cleared; it has rotted because it has been lying so long there uncleared. Who is responsible? Will any inquiry be held? Is it the officers of the Regional Food Directorate who should be brought to book for this criminal negligence? Or is it the clearing agents, R. Sen and Company, who are responsible? Will anybody inquire into it?

By the way, I must also refute one other argument put forward by the hon. Minister in his opening statement. That was the reference made to damage done to food in transit in wagons. He gave us to understand that there is a shortage of closed wagons and that was why sometimes food had to be sent in open wagons. I submit this is not a correct statement of fact. There is no shortage of closed wagons in the country. There is an excess of wagons, and wagon orders have been cut down, the factories producing wagons are closing their doors, because the Railway Board say that they have so many wagons that they do not know what to do with them. My information is that the Railway board or the Railway Ministry is insisting that the open wagons in which iron ore has to be carried to the ports for export to Japan, which are sent to Bombay, Calcutta, Goa and so on, must be brought back, not empty but loaded with foodgrains, otherwise there will be some financial loss to the Railways. So, the real reason is that greater priority is being given to the iron ore which is to be sent to Japan to be turned into steel or iron by the Japanese industrialists, than to the food which is required to keep our people alive. Just for the sake of using those open wagons which are meant for transporting iron ore, the food must be brought back from the ports in the same wagons in an exposed condition, and the result is that we have seen what has happened in Delhi the other day and what is happening in different parts of

the country. You can do it in the dry season, but in this monsoon season this practice must be given up. When we have not got enough food, you cannot gamble like this, you cannot lose even one tonne of food in this manner. The House should not be given a wrong statement of facts.

The Orissa Government, I believe, has not yet agreed to send to Bengal the 7,000 tonne of rice which is already due from them, because they say that in exchange for this the Centre had promised to give them 7,000 tonne extra of wheat, and because they have not received that, they are not despatching the promised 7,000 tonne of rice to Bengal. I want to know whether this is a fact or not. If this is a fact, I want to know why that wheat is not being sent to them, to enable them to despatch the rice in exchange to Bengal.

I only wish to say that it is very sad that we have been almost lulled into a sense of complacency, that because we are having fairly good rains we are sort of turning the corner. We should not suffer from any such complacency. We do not know what may happen next year, whether the next year will not be a bad year again, which is beyond our control, we do not know whether these American supplies of wheat will continue as they are continuing now or not. Therefore, we must plan from a long-term point of view and I charge this Government with an absolute, total lack of long-term planning. I want to know their plan for the next harvest. If you want to turn the corner, you should begin from now with a long-term plan for doing the maximum possible procurement in the next harvest which all of us hope is going to be a fairly good one.

The Food Corporation is only an instrument of procurement, it cannot make plans, policies and strategies. That has to be done by you, by the Government, but nothing of the kind is being done, and as far as I know, the Food Corporation is not being given the necessary powers and the necessary resources with which they can launch on a really big, massive scale of procurement on the next harvest, so that we can at least begin to build up some reserve. All this talk of a national food budget and all that is useless unless this is done, unless the Food Corporation goes and procures, and the States are also assured by the Centre that a part of the reserve will be earmarked for the use of that State. There must be a reserve built up, part of which is reserved for each State and part of it for the Central Government. Have such discussions been held, have they had any consultations with the States, has the Food Corporation been given an over-all strategy as to how to set about this operation? As far as I know, nothing of this kind has been done.

I am told that these surplus States which have got certain surpluses are given certain benefits, and because of this zonal system I am afraid they are

profiting by it too. We want this zonal system to go, it is the most illogical thing ever conceived, because it is penalising every deficit State and smuggling cannot be prevented out of the surplus States. Shri Brahmananda Reddy* himself has admitted this, that from Andhra thousands of tonnes of rice are being smuggled. On the one side of the border, Andhra is surplus and on the other side of the border, Kerala is starving. This is a ridiculous state of affairs. These surplus States are given certain advantages. They get a bonus for procurement. The Punjab Government gets a surcharge. I want to know whether the Centre sees to it that the money which is being earned by the surplus States by way of bonus, surcharge and so on, is not used up in the general account of the Consolidated Fund of the State, but is at least earmarked for improving agricultural production. Is there that much planning?

It is impossible to do justice to this subject in such a short time. I have made only a few remarks. I will say that for the moment, for the next two months, do anything you like but do not allow the people to starve; beg, borrow, or steal or do anything. Even at the risk of our own self-respect, we are prepared to give you a free hand for that. But for the next year, for long-term planning, if you do not begin from now on, you will be landed in a terrible mess. Therefore, I call upon the Minister to tell us whether they are serious about any national food budget planning and whether they are willing to be really firm and stop this private trading in foodgrains, whether they are prepared to take over wholesale trade or whether they will just simply say: let us go the same way we have always been going, in which case the country will be drowned in blood and in all kinds of commotions and disturbances and I am afraid he will also ultimately have to leave his seat and go.

---

*Referring to Shri K. Brahmananda Reddy, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

Sir, I have with me copies of the record of what the Minister had said in November last, when this matter was raised in this House. He had laid a statement in reply to a Starred Question and then he had replied to supplementaries. I find that what he has said now is in no way different from what he had said then. Then also he had said, "We will do certain things, we are thinking of doing certain things, taking certain measures." The same thing is repeated now again.

I thought he would quote some price index figures because the Government is very fond of trying to show that there is some slight stabilisation or even slight fall in the wholesale price index. From week to week, they are announcing that in the newspapers. But I am concerned here with the price of essential commodities which an ordinary man has to pay in the retail shop, in the fair price shop, where he buys. The figure of 0.06 per cent, 0.04 per cent, etc. which he has quoted here may be all right in theory, in abstract terms. But it does not have the slightest impact on the actual retail prices which an ordinary man has to pay every day.

I can give you one simple proof of that which the Finance Minister, Shri R. Venkataraman, knows. I would like to ask him, if the prices were really stabilising or coming down, how many times they had to increase the dearness allowance of the Central Government employees in the recent period. Why have they increased it if the price index figure with which the dearness allowance of the Central Government employees is linked has stabilised or come down? It has to go up by eight points in twelve months and then only they are eligible to get an extra instalment of dearness allowance. They have had to pay two instalments of dearness allowance in the recent period.

*** *** ***

And they have not yet been paid. This is enough to prove how the actual consumer cost of living index is moving.

---

* Calling Attention to a matter of urgent public importance: rise in price of essential commodities; *L.S. Deb.*, 17 February 1981.

Recently, I read that Shri Shukla* has made an appeal to private citizens of this country to organise cooperatives for doing distribution of essential commodities. That means, the Government is actually admitting in a round about way the failure of its public distribution network and the failure or inadequacy of these fair price shops. Otherwise, there is no point in appealing to private citizens to supplement the distribution network by organising their own private cooperatives. The prospect which was held out before us earlier, the promise which was made to us earlier, was that the public distribution system would be made much more widespread, comprehensive, and that a network would be created throughout the country. Instead of moving in that direction—he has not said anything about it here—he is making an appeal to private citizens to organise their own cooperatives. Well if private citizens take an initiative to organise their own cooperatives, it is a good thing, it is a praise-worthy thing. But the way he has said it, means that they are no longer having confidence in their own public distribution system. This is not surprising. He has even said that if more fair price shops are opened, then more staff has to be recruited to man those shops and, apparently, that will mean a big increase in wages and salaries which the Government cannot afford. That is what has come out in the Press. He had better contradict it.

I think, the hon. members of this House, many of them will admit, if not all of them, that even in the fair price shops from where members of Parliament draw their ration in the localities where MPs quarters are situated, every now and then, some of the statutorily rationed commodities, particularly cereals, are not available. So many members of Parliament have complained about it. They send their man to the shop with the card and he is told, "There is no supply this week. You come next week." Sometimes it is sugar, sometimes it is *atta* and sometimes it is wheat. If this is the condition in the fair price shops which are supposed to cater to MPs and their families, one can well imagine what the situation is where the ordinary people down below are concerned, particularly in the rural and semi-urban areas. I personally would say that the whole system is actually stagnating, and if it stagnates, then it will break down gradually. The real reason for it is that they are refusing to take over complete State responsibility for the distribution of these essential commodities. Shri Shukla seems to think that proliferation of more agencies of different kinds—cooperatives, this and that—is going to be the answer. But proliferation of the agencies is not the reply, because you are dealing with a situation where the private trade and profiteers are controlling the actual stocks of the commodities which, you would say, you want to distribute. The stocks are with them, the stocks are not with you. and if your system is

*Referring to Shri V.C. Shukla, the then Minister of Civil Supplies.

to work effectively, you have to ensure physical control over the stocks, and to ensure physical control over the stocks, you will have to come to grips with the big traders, hoarders, stockists and wholesale-traders who, of course, are your best friends and whom you do not want to antagonise. I think, he has said somewhere—I read in the Press—that 80,000 cases under the Essential Commodities Act are pending in various courts of law. That is all that will happen, no action will be taken. On all these things like sugar, cloth, coal, edible oil, drugs, kerosene, cooking gas, paper, soap or cement, I thought he would say something. This is what is meant by essential commodities. I know that the Ministry of Civil Supplies is not responsible for all the different economic forces which are working. I am quite aware of that. But, nevertheless, he has got to answer as to how his Ministry is trying to ensure physical stocks of essential commodities without which it is useless to talk about an effective public distribution system. I would like to ask him one or two questions.

I find that the Indian Sugar Mill Owners' Association is demanding from the Government that the quota of free sale sugar should be increased and the quota of levy sugar should be reduced. Shri D.D. Puri, who is the Chairman of that Association and who was once a member of this House, has gone on record making this demand that either you decontrol sugar completely as the Janata Government had done at one time or you reduce the levy quota of sugar from 50 per cent to 40 per cent or something and correspondingly increase the free sale quota of sugar. I want a clear and categorical answer here from the Government as to what they propose to do about this, whether they are going to make any concession on this to the sugar mill owners and the sugar trade owners, whether they have got the courage to say that; on the contrary they propose to increase the levy quota of sugar and reduce the free sale quota. Already, in December last, this Government itself increased the issue price of levy sugar by 65 paise per kilo, in one jump, which is causing immense hardship to the poor people. One should know that. But now I am apprehensive that, under the pressure of sugar mill owners, they are likely to make some further concessions to them.

Regarding cloth, of course, the standard cloth has now become a sort of mirage. Where is that standard cloth? Who has got the responsibility for making it now except the mills of the National Textile Corporation (NTC)? Perhaps he could tell us what is the performance of the NTC mills, which have been saddled with the entire burden of manufacturing standard cloth, in this respect in the last few months, how much standard cloth is being produced, whether the production is going up and how it is being distributed, because the entire private sector in the textile industry, thanks to your generosity, has been totally absolved of the responsibility of making any standard cloth; they complained that they did not make profits, and you

said, "All right; you need not make any standard cloth". Now, the public sector mills are saddled with that responsibility. Does not matter; that is your policy. But now we want to know what your production is and what you are doing for stepping up the output of standard cloth and distributing it effectively through the public distribution system. A couple of days ago I found that the textile mill owners have said that because of the hike in the price of coal which you have announced, and they apprehend a further rise in case railway freights are increased, they are already saying, 'We will have to raise the general all-round prices.'

*** *** ***

Then in coal, you have increased the prices, of course, and you will say, 'We will have to do it in order to cut the losses of Coal India Ltd'. But Coal India Ltd. price at pithead has been increased by Rs. 26.84 per tonne.

*** *** ***

But what is the price you have to pay for buying coal outside? I am not talking about coking coal for steel plants and all that. I am talking about domestic coal, that is, non-coking coal. That is selling anywhere between Rs. 100 and Rs. 150 per tonne. You cannot get it anywhere except in the black market by paying this price. Is this not a fact?

As for edible oils, I just quote a few lines from an editorial which had been written on the 9th of this month and published in the *Economic Times*— about the edible oil supply.

> "There is an apprehension in the country that what happened last year (1980) with regard to sugar is likely to happen in 1981 in the case of edible oils....

We all know what happened to sugar. You must tell us something about this now. The *Economic Times* says:

> "The edible oil situation in the whole country has gone out of gear. The consumer pays through his nose not only for groundnut oil but for several other edible oils. The most unwarranted restriction imposed by the Gujarat government on the movement of oil outside the State has added to the confusion. The Centre has not approved of this State measure but it has done nothing to make the State realise its obligations to neighbouring deficit States. The consumer has reason to be frustrated by the strange attitude of the Central Civil Supplies Ministry...

That means the Ministry over which Shri Shukla presides. I quote:

> "Nowhere is the charge of non-performance of the government so irrefutable as in the Ministry of Civil Supplies. During the last few

weeks there has been a contra-seasonal (not seasonal but contra-seasonal) upsurge in the prices of several mass consumer items. But the Ministry's attitude has been that of a passive spectator."

I do not wish to quote any more such things which are now forcing their way to the forefront of national publicity. We are afraid that edible oil is going to go completely out of the reach of the common people this year just like sugar went last year.

You have imported large quantities of edible oils which are finding its way to the black market through the various retail outlets. Therefore, the prices of edible oils outside are anywhere between Rs. 18, 19 and 20 a kilo. Anybody who is buying edible oil outside knows it.

Only a few weeks ago there was an announcement that the prices of 60 drugs have been raised. I do not know which are those drugs. They have not enumerated them in the press communique, except to mention that almost all the vitamins that people consume—Vitamins A, B, C, D, etc.—are all included in these 60 drugs whose prices the Government has decided to raise. I want to know whether Vitamins are an essential commodity or not. What is your criterion?

Then Sir, there is the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices which every now and then makes recommendations to the Government and they invariably recommend increasing the prices on the plea that the manufacturers are not able to cover the cost of their production and get an adequate return. I want to know whether it is a fact that all these big drugs manufacturers, foreign firms and their subsidiaries in this country are reaping huge profits and paying fat dividends. If every few months the prices of these drugs manufactured by them are increased, it will become impossible for the common man to buy any of these medicines and drugs. These standard drugs—are they now to be brought within the system of controlled prices and distribution? I do not know. You should tell us what your perspective is. I have spoken last time—I do not want to repeat all that—about paper, cement, soap and all that, but the same situation is prevailing and it is going to be so all the time. I would just say that you would also take some lessons from the Kerala Government. I think your predecessor has been honest enough to admit on the floor of this House, that the best and most efficient public distribution system at present in this country is the one run by the Kerala Government. You should at least try to find out how they run it. It is not a magic wand that they are distributing these commodities. These are being handled by their public distribution system. The State Government have published their official booklet. I can give it to you if you like to read it.

*** *** ***

We know that for many years there had been non-Communist Governments. Just look at the State Corporation there. In Kerala there is an Essential Commodities Corporation which is handling rice, wheat, wheat products, pulses, green gram, Bengal gram, black gram, spices, chillies, coriander, vegetable, sugar, tea, coffee, cement, petroleum products, and other commodities. They are procuring 18 items through their own Civil Supplies Department from various States; they are building up stocks for three months and distributing these 18 commodities. The State Government is saying that because of the inability of other State Governments to take on the distribution of free-sale sugar through the public distribution machinery, the sugar price went as high as Rs. 12 to 18 a kilo whereas in Kerala, at no time, the free-sale sugar price was as high as Rs. 8 a kilo even in the private shops.

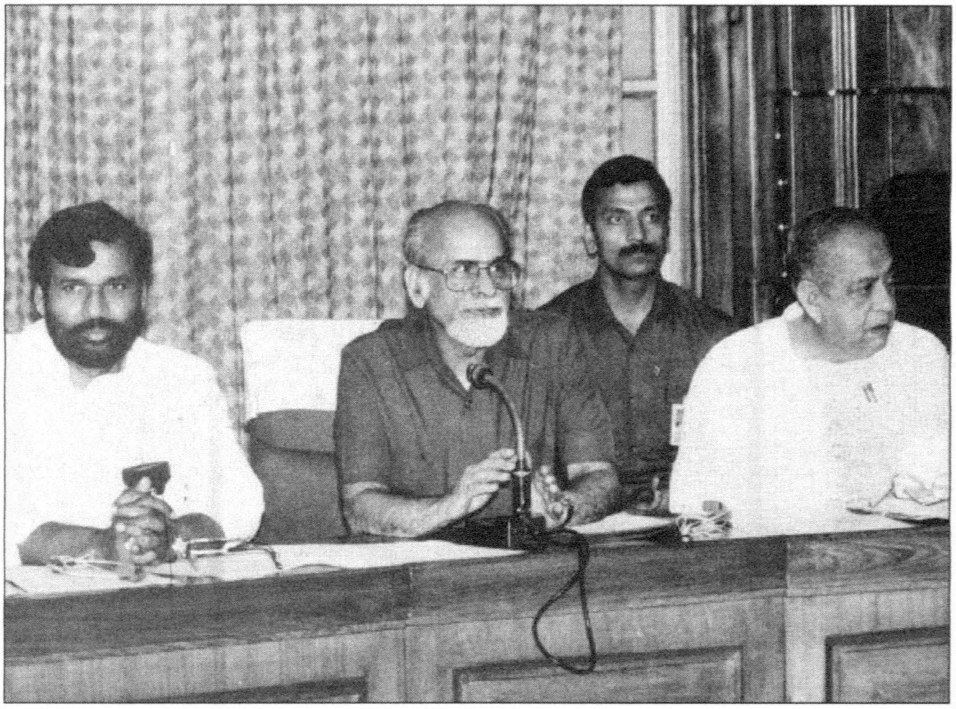
So, all I wish to say is that it is not that these things cannot be done. The whole question is whether there is a will to do it or not; whether there is a political will or whether economically and financially, you have the courage to do it. Whether you are prepared to come to grips with the people who do not want to have an effective public distribution system, that is, the traders, the profiteers and the hoarders and so on. If they want to collect money from these people for rallies like the one we had yesterday, they cannot do that. If they are not taking any firm measures, there is no hope of the public distribution system working at all and, therefore, we are facing a very difficult and critical situation. I would like you to spell out something concretely as to what you are doing or what you are going to do. If you are not able to do anything, tell us that also. We do not want this kind of a hopelessly vague statement which he has laid on the Table of the House.

After taking over as Union Minister for Home Affairs in the Council of Ministers headed by Shri H.D. Deve Gowda in New Delhi, 1 July 1996

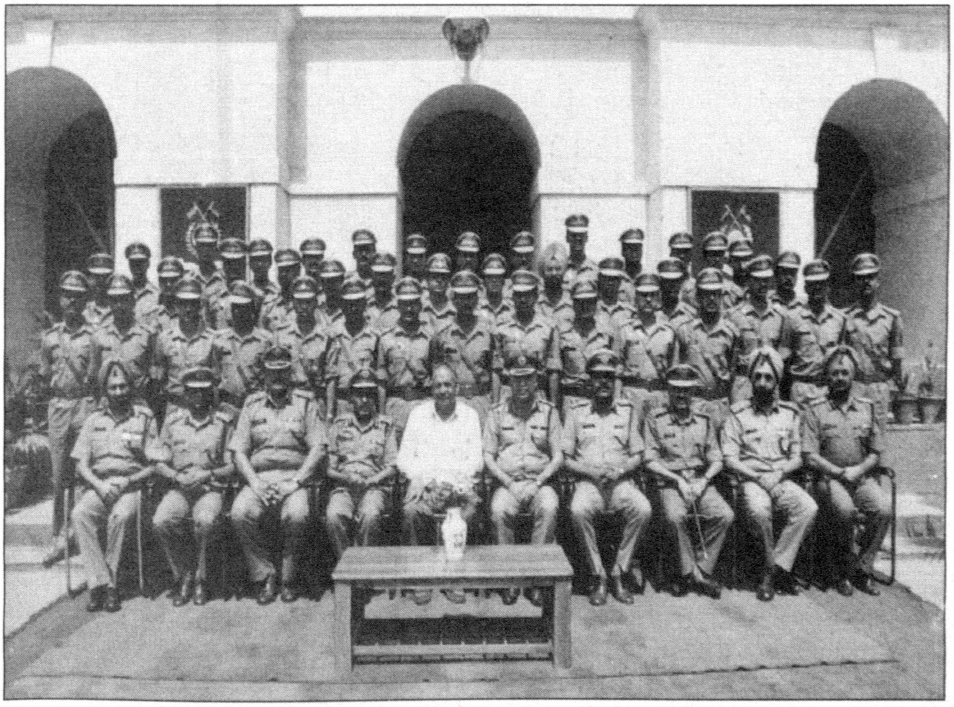
Shri Indrajit Gupta in his office as the Union Home Minister

Inspecting the guard of honour as the Union Home Minister at the 34th Anniversary Celebrations of the ITBP in New Delhi, 24 October 1996

Taking the oath of office of Cabinet Minister in the Union Council of Ministers headed by Shri I.K. Gujral in New Delhi, 21 April 1997



With the then Prime Minister, Shri I.K. Gujral and Shri Ram Vilas Paswan at an All Party Meeting in New Delhi, 7 May 1997



With the DG, CRPF, and the newly appointed DSPs of the CRPF in New Delhi, 10 June 1997

Briefing the Press about the Standing Committee Meeting of the Inter-State Council in New Delhi, 17 June 1997

Shri Indrajit Gupta at the Press briefing after the Standing Committee Meeting of the Inter-State Council in New Delhi, 17 June 1997

Delivering the inaugural speech at the 11th All India Civil Defence and Home Guards Biennial Conference in New Delhi, 19 June 1997

BILATERAL AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ON INDO-PAK AGREEMENT ON THE GUJARAT-WEST PAKISTAN BORDER*

When the news first spread throughout the country on 30th June that a cease-fire agreement had been reached in Kutch, before the details of all the implications and the precise terms of that cease-fire agreement were known, a great feeling of relief, I believe, swept through the country. That was quite natural because the *status quo ante,* which the Government announced, had been achieved, meant to the people of this country one thing by and large, that all the posts and all the areas which had been forcibly occupied by Pakistani armed aggression would have to be vacated, and also that for the time being at least, the danger or the threat, which at one time seemed very real, of the Kutch conflict escalating into a much bigger conflict all along the border, seemed to have been averted. There was, therefore, a general feeling of relief.

On a closer examination of the terms of the cease-fire agreement, as the Prime Minister has said, if one takes a formal view of things, a narrowly formal, factual view of things, then there can be no doubt that the *status quo ante* as it prevailed on 1 January 1965 has been restored through the terms of the agreement. I suppose that, where we are dealing with matters of international relations and conventions between sovereign States, one has to go by formal facts, there is no other way for it. But when the detailed implications were known, the country realised that this *status quo ante* as it existed and which may have to be accepted, because it is the factual formal position, was nevertheless a very very bitter pill for this country to swallow. That *status quo ante* was something which was the creation, I charge, of the bungling by this Government, and not only of bungling but of suppression of facts from the people of this country. So that, a cease-fire in the abstract is something which I do not think any persons in their senses can oppose—of course, not cease-fire at any price—a cessation of hostilities which restores a *status quo ante* prior to aggression is something which formally can never be opposed. But what do we find on an examination of the terms?

In the first place, the withdrawal which is to take place and which has taken place, or may not yet have been completed—I do not know whether

* Participating in the discussion on the Motion regarding Indo-Pakistan agreement on Gujarat-West Pakistan Border; *L.S. Deb.,* 16 August 1965.

it is still in the process of taking place—the nature of that withdrawal is such that it is not a withdrawal on an equitable basis. Our army, our regular armed forces, have to withdraw for a considerable distance south of the international border. I do not know the exact depth of that withdrawal, because it is not stipulated anywhere in the text of the agreement. I presume we have to vacate, our Army has to vacate, the entire area which before 1 November 1965 was being patrolled only by our State police and not by the regular Army. But on the other side of the border, across the border, the regular Pakistan armed forces having withdrawn from Kanjarkot and Chad Bet and Biar Bet and Sardar post, can remain absolutely on their side of the border right up to the frontier. Is it an equitable withdrawal? On their side of the border they are right up against the border. On our side our Armed Forces have to withdraw a considerable distance. Now, if that was the position we have to accept it. But is it something to pat ourselves on the back about? How does this state of affairs come about?

Now, we find from official documents from 1959 and 1960 the existence of a dispute over that area, based on claims put forward by Pakistan for regions south of the 24th parallel. That dispute existed and was admitted, was recognised, by the Government of India. It is there in the terms of the agreement of 1960; it is admitted. And now, aggression takes place in the year 1965. It means that over a whole period of five years, where our Government was aware of the existence of a dispute, where our Government had admitted the existence of a dispute and had said "yes, both sides will have to collect documents and papers and what not, to see what the real position is"—that was done five years ago—in such an area which is a live area, which may become the object of aggression at any time, our armed forces for five years had not been moved up to the border and up to the forward position. I want to know why. I am sorry the Defence Minister is not here but many assurances have been given to this House in the last two and a half years that in all the live border areas, our army is being posted right up at the forward posts so that we may not be taken by surprise again in the future. Was it because of the Gujarat State—I do not know, I want to be enlightened on this—was it because the State Government of Gujarat treated this or considered this area to be some sort of private zamindari of its own and resented that the Central forces should not intrude there over the heads of the State police? Was it that?

*** *** ***

Every time an attack takes place we find that our State police is left to hold the baby at the border until the Armed Forces which are way back are brought up a considerable time later. Why was this done? And the result of it is now reflected in the terms of the *status quo* agreement, the cease-fire

agreement, that our Army cannot go up to the border and the Pakistan army can go up to the border on its side; but we cannot, we have to go back and say, "no, only our police will remain there" because that is the position as it was before 1 January, 1965, Who is responsible for this?

The State police behaved with the utmost gallantry. We know how they were faced and were attacked by overwhelming numbers; and the House appreciates very much the gallantry and the devotion that they displayed. The gallantry awards that were published are all for the personnel of the State police, many of them posthumous, to gallant constables and officers who died holding those forward positions.

Incidentally I am recalling a point, since the Home Minister is here, and I would like to point out that the gallantry awards for another gallant action which was fought, again by the State police, at Dahagram, the gallantry awards for that action have not been announced. I know it for a fact that from my State at least there were five recommendations for gallantry awards which are held up in the office of the Inspector-General of Police in West Bengal. I want to know why these gallantry awards are held up, and why they are not announced.

Anyway, I say that first of all the fact that our Army has to pull back is directly due to the callous indifference, complacency, neglect and negligence shown by this Government, which knew five years ago that there was a dispute about that area, that Pakistan had claimed over 3,500 square miles and which yet refused to move our Armed Forces up to the forward posts and left it in the hands of the State police. And because formally we have to accept that position, our Army has to come back.

Secondly, about this Ding-Surai track, I am reminded again of the plea that was put forward in the days of the Chinese aggression when we were told that we were not aware of the fact that this Aksai-Chin road was being built and was built; it was only after it was constructed that we came to know about it. The Pakistan Government claims that its police patrols were ranging far and wide over the Rann of Kutch, a claim which they were not able to substantiate except in the case of this eighteen-mile track linking Ding with Surai. I want to know, did we know about it or not? At the time when this agreement was signed, a regular propaganda campaign, officially inspired, went on in the Press day after day saying that Pakistan had produced irrefutable evidence that before 1 January 1965 their police patrols had regularly been using the Ding-Surai track; and that is the reason why we have now to accept it. But the statement made by the Prime Minister here today, both his speech, which we heard and the written statement, says that the Pakistan patrols were "said to have used" this track while moving from

Ding to Surai, and this had to be accepted as part of the restoration of the *status quo ante*. I want to know what is the position. This kind of beating about the bush will not do. This House is not going to be hoodwinked any longer. Either they say that the Pakistan patrols were said to have used that track—and if they were said to have used the track and could not produce any more conclusive evidence, why does it say in the next sentence that it "had to be accepted" as part of the restoration of the *status quo ante*—or, if that is not the position, the position was, as was earlier reported in the Press, that there was irrefutable evidence. I want to know, if there was such irrefutable evidence, what were our intelligence services doing all this time.

*** *** ***

And why was the House not told about it? Exactly, that is my question. Either they did not know, Government were ignorant about it, or they knew about it and these facts were being suppressed. And every time an incident like this takes place, we come up again and again on this question of our intelligence. Every time, since 1962, we have been told that our intelligence services had suffered from some defects and lapses and that these are being removed and it is being given priority. General Bhagat, who was one of the officers appointed to hold that enquiry into the NEFA disaster, has recently published a book in which also he has repeated this as to how our defence intelligence and other intelligence systems are being reorganised and are being very well equipped and so on. But how is it that they did not know about this track which was being used for a long-long time, and which Pakistan has now established and proved? I say that although a formal change has been made at the top of the intelligence system by removing Shri B. Mullick from there, perhaps, in practice I believe that he continues to be a very important person, a sort of adviser on intelligence to the Government, to the Prime Minister. And this gentleman, whose whole organisation has proved over and over again that it is thoroughly incompetent, inadequate, on every occasion, is still here, permitted to carry on in this fashion. And now that is reflected in the terms of the agreement and we have to swallow this pill now.

I am surprised that yesterday, while speaking from the Red Fort, the Prime Minister said—of course I do not know whether he has been quoted correctly or not; but this is the *Times of India* report today, and it says—Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri said that the Pakistani army and police—of course, as far as the army goes it is correct—the Pakistan army and police were no longer present in any part of Kutch. Are they not allowed to patrol the Ding-Surai tract which is south of the international border? How is it that this statement is made? Does it correspond with facts, is it accurate? Then it says: "Shri Shastri also said that India was in full civil control of the Rann of Kutch."

I submit it is not an accurate statement. You may say that this track is a very small area but I do not think that one's sovereignty is judged by the extent of square miles or feet involved. The point is that we have had to swallow this pill and the whole blame for it rests on this Government. Thirdly, there was also this question. Of course my hon. friend Shri N.G. Ranga has quoted the ground rules which were drawn up between General Thapar on our side and Lt. Gen. Bakhtiar Rana on the other side in 1960. In these ground rules, I find that there was also an obligation undertaken by both sides, when they send patrols within the zone specified upto the *de facto* boundary, to inform the other side about the actual patrol beat, give full particulars regarding the number of patrols, when they will operate and so on. I am raising this point because I want to know whether ever, at any stage, Pakistan had informed our side that they were patrolling not only in the region of their side of the *de facto* boundary but across it. Naturally, they would not inform us. Being ignoramuses of these things always, we do not know anything about it. I want the Government to examine whether or not there had been any blatant, flagrant violation by Pakistan of these ground rules as far as the patrolling of that track was concerned and if so whether it was not a good ground for us to get out of some of the provisions of this agreement. Has it been examined? We are given this document today for the first time; we have hardly the time to go through it properly. But this point struck me here.

Then, as regards the restoration of the *status quo*, it has something to do with the past. It is bad enough as it is. But our main objection and our fundamental objection is to the provision for the future because it is one thing to argue: we have no option but to go back to the *status quo ante*, however difficult it may be for us; we have to accept it, unpleasant or unpalatable though it may be. That is one argument that is possible. But no such argument can be advanced for the future. The future arrangement which is laid down in this agreement regarding arbitration, is the tribunal. There was no compulsion on us to accept this. Perhaps there were some indirect compulsions behind the scenes but we were not told about it. The people of this country and this sovereign Parliament was never taken into confidence. This Government preferred to indulge in secret diplomacy behind the scenes and that too under the protective umbrella of British mediation in the White Hall. We were never told that as long ago as 1959-60, we had admitted to Pakistan: yes, you have also got a territorial dispute, not only a dispute concerning the demarcation of the already existing accepted border. This House was told in the month of April, before it went into recess that there was no dispute except regarding the question of demarcation on the ground. We were told that demarcation pillars already existed on the western and eastern extremities of the border and due to certain difficulties it was not possible to plant pillars along the remaining line and the only question was

to demarcate on the ground; there could be no question of entertaining Pakistan's fantastic claims of 3,500 sq. miles which would push the whole line down several miles south of the 24th parallel, which would mean, I presume, that the demarcation pillars which are already there will have to be uprooted. How else can Pakistan's claim be entertained? The existing pillars have to be uprooted. This is what we were led to believe. And now we find that somewhere in the recesses of the Whitehall, thanks to the good offices of Mr. Harold Wilson, we have signed an agreement in which we have clearly agreed that the terms of reference of this Tribunal will not be confined to the question of demarcation on the ground of an existing international border between Kutch and Sind but will also include the validity or not of the claims of Pakistan over a wide area of the Rann of Kutch itself. Thus our territorial sovereignty has been made justiciable; it has been made a matter for arbitration and award by a third party tribunal. Was this the impression given to this House before we went into a recess, that such a thing would be permitted? There seems to be a pathetic reliance by this Government on what it calls the good offices of the British Government, as though it is impartial and neutral. Is it not linked in a formal military pact with Pakistan? Is it not its military partner? We know over the years, while the Kashmir dispute was discussed at the U.N.O., what attitude the British Government's representative had taken in the U.N.O. and other places. They were the original creators of Pakistan and surely there was some motive behind the division of the country. We continue to have reliance on them rather than on this House and the people of this country. The seed which was planted by them has yielded its evil fruit. Now, at the present moment, something is taking place in Kashmir, the coming in of infiltrators. I believe it has got some connection with this clause of arbitration. There is a motive behind it. The motive is to mount this attack and go on harassing us in Kashmir because, as we know, these infiltrators are much more difficult to deal with than regular armed forces in uniform and moving in conventional ways; the motive is to create such disorder, confusion and commotion in Kashmir and to keep it festering and ultimately perhaps in the guise of a mediator, some friend will appear in the West who will say: come on, let us try and have a peaceful settlement and once again on the analogy of Kutch, we will have some sort of arbitration proposal tried to be thrust upon us in its application to Kashmir also. We have cut the ground from under our feet by accepting this proposal in the case of Kutch and Government has made justiciable before a tribunal and arbitrator, areas over which our territorial sovereignty was unquestionable. I submit that before this House went into recess if the Prime Minister had taken the opinion of the House as to whether they were authorised to agree to such a thing. I am sure that this House would never have given them this authority. That is why this country and this House were bypassed and secret diplomacy was resorted to.

Now, Sir, we were not told also of a thing which is really the most alarming of all. I want to know what is going to happen if this three-men tribunal cannot come to a unanimous decision. On 23 October 1959 an agreed decision was arrived at and the extract of it is given in this agreement. It says:

> "It was agreed that all outstanding boundary disputes on the East Pakistan-India and West Pakistan-India border, raised so far by either country should be referred to an impartial tribunal consisting of three members, for settlement and implementation of that settlement by demarcation on the ground and by exchange of territorial jurisdiction, if any.... It was also agreed that the decision of the tribunal shall be by majority and final and binding on both the parties."

In the tribunal which we have accepted for Kutch, we will have one nominee of Pakistan, and one will be our nominee and if both of them could not agree on a Chairman, the U.N. Secretary General will appoint his nominee. I want to know whether the Government has in all seriousness considered this position that if a verdict is given by that tribunal by two to one, by the nominee of U.N. Secretary-General and Pakistan's nominee against us, upholding the claim of Pakistan in part or in full south of the 24th parallel in the Rann of Kutch, we have bound ourselves beforehand to accept it, whatever it may be. Yet while fighting was going on in Kanjarkot and while our policemen and soldiers were dying, we were told day in and day out that there was no question of anything happening excepting demarcation on the ground of the border that was already a settled fact. Is this not deception? What kind of irresponsibility is this, which has opened our position, doomed us to a state where by a majority of two to one, this tribunal can, if we take the formal position, even accept the whole of Pakistan's stand? There is nothing against it. It is no use saying that we can prove our case and so on and so forth. Pakistan may be equally confident. We do not know what all those papers and documents and things are, to which reference has been made in this agreement. The whole thing is going to be based on documents. Therefore, we say here, that what is being done for the future is something under which the Government was under no compulsion whatsoever; they could easily have refused; they could have told the British Government and they could have told the Pakistan Government exactly what they told this House. Why did they lack the courage to tell them what they have the courage to tell this House—that we will not accept such a position? If it is a question about demarcation on the ground, there may be the question of half a mile here or two miles there or one mile here or there, where the demarcation line may be shifted this way or that way. That is a different matter. Everybody understands that. But why did they not tell the House before going to London, that if necessary we will agree even to submission of Pakistan's claim to a

tribunal? That way, the territorial sovereignty is being bartered away. And, therefore, my party has taken this stand: we took the stand on the 30th June, that because formal restoration of the *status quo ante* has taken place, although, as I said earlier, it contains some very, very unpalatable things which are the creation of this Government's own previous policy, even so, we said that ceasefire is a cease-fire; at least for the time being it stops the hostilities and it prevents further escalation of this war. It does restore the *status quo* but that does not mean that we can give any sort of unqualified support or any other support to the precise terms of this agreement, and particularly to the term regarding arbitration to which we are totally opposed. We have tabled an amendment to the motion in which we have tried to concentrate the attention of this Government to this point, and said that it is one thing to get a cease-fire agreement; a cease-fire agreement does not contain within itself any necessity of laying down a procedure for the future settlement. A cease-fire agreement is a restoration of the *status quo ante*. As far as that goes, the former position is there. You have to accept it but not hide it from the country. The responsibility of the Government for the future is there; hiding it would be certainly detrimental to our national dignity and self-respect.

But why was it inevitable that this agreement should also visualise this type of arbitration? Therefore, we are totally opposed to that. And when it comes to voting on this, our party will have to vote accordingly, because this thing cannot be seen—the way that the Prime Minister wants us to see it—that we must give our unqualified support to this whole agreement. That cannot be done.

Therefore, I submit that if this kind of practice continues in future, it will be bad. My hon. friend Shri Ranga—I do not know what he meant when he was talking about it just now—was mentioning the need for strengthening our defence preparations much more by getting powerful friends to help us. I do not know to whom he was referring to. But I do not see how America can help us because the Patton tanks which we found in the Rann of Kutch did not come from China or from anywhere else. The Patton tanks were manufactured in the same country which supplies us the PL 480 wheat. They did not come from anywhere else. I want to know from this statement, which was made here by the Defence Minister, one thing. These arms, these weapons, this equipment, which have been found with the infiltrators in Kashmir—at least these which carry markings, and they may be markings only of the Pakistan army—are they all arms and equipments which were only manufactured indigenously in Pakistan? I do not think so. They were imported, for use, with foreign exchange. So, who are the friends who are going to help us? Of course, the Government has said that as far as procuring arms and equipment is concerned, the Soviet Union has said that they are prepared to sell or give us whatever we want. But who are the other friends?

I do not understand how the friends of the West, in this particular case, who are themselves involved—they are interested parties and they cannot be impartial because they are members of their own military bloc.

How do we expect them to come to our help in this matter? They will not do it. And yet, our Government rushes to these people over and over again for mediation. Therefore, we have landed ourselves in a soup now, and my party demands that all possible ways and means should be explored by the Government, even at this hour, of seeing how it is possible to revoke or substantially modify, at least those parts of the agreement which relate to the arbitration, the tribunal procedure. It is not laid down explicitly, I must say, in this agreement, in the body or the text of the agreement itself, that this future tribunal will be empowered to take the majority decision which will be binding. It is there in the 1959 agreement, which has been very conveniently circulated along with this, within the same cover. I suggest that this Government should see and make all efforts to see that if they are not capable of revoking this agreement—this is our demand—the minimum they can do is to see that the mischief created by the terms of reference, which have been given here, has got to be removed and the matters which have been left completely vague, namely, how the decision of the tribunal is to be taken, unanimously or by a majority or what—all these things have got to be made clear and all these loopholes have got to be plugged. Otherwise, tomorrow,—I say it here with all responsibility—we will have no way of getting out of accepting, in some form or the other, a tribunal or arbitration in Kashmir also. We have cut the ground from under our own feet now. This analogy will be rammed down our throats by our friends of the West time and again, if you can accept it here, why can't you accept it there. Of course, we will go on saying, "No, we won't accept it; there is no question of any acceptance there." But we have said it here also; very brave words were said in April and May. But something different happened in White Hall.

Therefore, this is the position, and it is a very-very serious position about which the people of this country should be told frankly now, and even at this late hour, I would request the Prime Minister not to go on prevaricating, not to hide part of the facts but to say it openly. If we have had to accept an unpalatable thing regarding the past, say it, and take the responsibility for it. Do not hide it now. And for the future, make it clear that we are not going to accept any kind of arbitration over our territorial sovereignty. It is never done by any country. Why should we do it now?

An analogy has been trotted out in some quarters of the Press that the late Prime Minister had once made an offer which was not accepted, of course, by China, that the International Court of Justice might be approached to arbitrate on the question of Ladakh, but there is no border in Ladakh,

defined like that, defined or demarcated or delimited or anything like that. Everybody knows that. That was the position then, and that was why Prime Minister Nehru had said at that time, that on the basis of conventions, on the basis of all available records and documents and papers, etc., the border in Ladakh might be settled by arbitration by the International Court of Justice. Of course, China did not agree to that even, but then, that analogy does not apply here. Here in Kutch, there is a border, a definite, established, admitted, accepted international border, between Kutch and Sind, and yet we have thrown it open to arbitration again.

Therefore, there are very-very serious implications within this agreement for the future of the country, and we are very much alarmed about it and upset about it and misunderstandings throughout the country are spreading fast now. Therefore, we demand that this Government should, if it wants to consistently uphold our sovereign right and territorial integrity, revoke this clause which gives this power to the tribunal to arbitrate over our own territory. That is all I have got to say, and when it comes to the vote, we will have to vote accordingly.

ON THE INDUS WATERS TREATY AND ITS PROVISIONS*

... Our contractual obligations under this Treaty are very well known. There is no need to go on recapitulating them. The hon. Minister of Irrigation and Power dealt with this matter in a way which could be split up into two parts. On the one hand he tried to make a very enthusiastic defence of every single provision of this Treaty, as though everything contained in it was ultimately to India's benefit, and he maintained that there was nothing in the terms of the Treaty itself which was in any way harmful to India or disadvantageous to India. That is one portion of his argument.

The other portion, of course, was whether it was politically desirable or expedient or not to depart from those contractual obligations in any way today because of the situation which had arisen as a result of Pakistani aggression.

May I just mention one or two things which I think the hon. Minister has not quite correctly represented to the House? He said that anybody who had objections to the provisions of this treaty should have raised them at the time of the Treaty itself, particularly regarding the payments that we were supposed to make in foreign exchange. May I remind him, I have gone through the records very carefully, the debate on this matter took place in this House in November, 1960, and one of the main points raised by several members at that time was why the opinion of this House and the approval of Parliament had not been taken before Government actually signed this treaty, because the Treaty had been signed in September, and the matter was brought up for discussion before this House in November. The late Prime Minister, in his reply to those arguments, maintained that it was the right of the Government—and constitutionally it is their right—to enter into an agreement, and he said that only the technicalities relating to exchange of instruments of ratification were still left to be completed. But I must say one thing, that while raising the principal objections at that time, which I find in the course of the record of that debate, in which many prominent members of this House participated in the shape of critics, including the now Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, they did not, in my opinion, object very much to the detailed

* Participating in the discussion on the Motion on the Indus Water Treaty; *L.S. Deb.*, 10 November 1965.

provisions of this Treaty. The main objections which were raised fall into three categories. One objection was on the constitutional point, whether Government had done the right thing in signing this Treaty without getting the prior approval of Parliament. The second point was regarding the payment of Rs. 83 crore, where the main criticism made was, why we agreed to pay in sterling instead of in rupees—not that we should not pay anything at all; the third criticism made was regarding Pakistan's own record of perfidy, and many members expressed their apprehension on the floor of this House that we could not depend upon Pakistan to carry out conscientiously the terms of the Treaty. I think I have made a fairly objective summary of, as I could find, most of the criticism raised in this House at that time. It is not true to say that no criticisms were made or that the Government was very willing to listen to the criticisms, because it was already a *fait accompli* when it was brought before this House.

Then I must point out another slight matter of record. Just now the Irrigation and Power Minister said that fortunately no indents for water have been received so far this year from Pakistan and, therefore, we have not had to supply any water to them. I was glad to hear that. But I would like to know why this statement, which he has made here today had not been issued publicly earlier, because not content with receiving the water supplies and the money which we have to give them and which we have paid just now, on the 1st November, the latest instalment, Pakistan has counter-accused us. There is a newspaper report dated November 5 from Rawalpindi, which says that a government spokesman on their side has said that India was not observing the Indus Waters Treaty. It is they who are charging us, that India has not been supplying Pakistan's due share of the water supply to the Central Bari Doab Canal and the Sutlej Valley Canal. He said that the Central Bari Doab Canal has not been receiving water from India since 23 September, that is to say, since the date of the cease-fire. Now the Minister tells us something different. It is a very important matter. This kind of thing is being propagated through the Press throughout the world, whereas the Minister tells us now that no indents for water have been received from Pakistan and, therefore, no water has been supplied, and we are not obliged to supply since no indents have been received. If what he has stated is the correct position, why did not the Government make its position clear earlier? If this debate had not come up, nobody would have been any wiser because we have only read about Pakistan's charge against us in the papers.

As far as the provisions of this Treaty are concerned, the obligations we have undertaken for supply of water and so on, I have not much to say, because there is plenty of evidence in the Treaty to show that the matter was gone into very carefully by our own engineers; and certainly, I am not an

engineer or technical man and so I cannot say. Even now the Minister has said that there will be ample water for our purposes. His predecessor at that time, Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim also said on the floor of the House:

> "As far as the irrigation needs of India are concerned, within Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and East Punjab, the water India can take under the Treaty from the western rivers, is enough for the needs of these areas which are irrigated at present and those which will be irrigated later".

Many members had raised this question of the development of our own cultivable area and the possibility of water being insufficient for the purpose. The Minister said:

> "For both purposes, sufficient water has been allowed. Seven to ten million acre feet is the quantity which may be taken. That is enough for that area, no more can be used there for irrigation".

I take it these are responsible statements made by the Government before Parliament. Therefore, under normal circumstances, I have no reason to doubt that even under the Treaty, we have taken ample care to see that we are not deprived of the water which is essential for our own cultivable purposes. But I am surprised to find that this Treaty makes no provision, no allowance whatsoever, for any changed circumstances, however temporary that change may be. Suppose there is a particular year when our country is badly afflicted by drought or by monsoon or by locust pest. Even in such a year, there is no allowance whatsoever made in this Treaty, whereby we can claim some amount of allowance or exemption—partial exemption—for that year because of a particularly critical circumstance in that year for our own agriculture or our own rainfall. There is no provision made for that. Therefore, if many members are complaining—because this is a very bad year, particularly for the Punjab, Rajasthan and other areas which are suffering from drought—they are very well justified in doing so, because there seems to have been a total lack of foresight, in that, no provision for any kind of contingency of this sort has been made in the terms of this Treaty.

About the payment which has been made in sterling, other members have raised the point; I do not wish to repeat it. But I find that our Government suffers from some sort of a pathetic infatuation with the World Bank. The World Bank is not an entity floating in a vacuum. There are 8 countries which are participating in this particular project of the World Bank regarding the construction of replacement works in Pakistan. Of these, one is the USA, one is West Germany—whose anti-tank Cobra missiles were also in the Punjab two months ago—and the other countries are of the Commonwealth. So when we say that the World Bank is something to which we must always

bow down with respect and which should never suspect for a single moment and all that, I refuse to be a party to that kind of infatuation. The concrete facts of the matter are, that certain countries are involved. Those countries are known—if they were not known to hon. members opposite before, I hope at least now they are after August-September—to have the most venomous kind of bias against India, wherever Pakistan is concerned. But in 1964, this World Bank—of which I am talking—had submitted certain proposals to both countries on the basis of which it suggested that a treaty should be drawn up. We find that ultimately in 1960, it is those proposals of the World Bank which have been incorporated almost *in toto* in the terms of the 1960 Treaty. If one reads through the debate which took place in this House in November 1960, one finds both the late Prime Minister and the present Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission waxing eloquent and indignant about any criticism made by anybody about the *bona fides* of the World Bank and suggesting that it is beyond suspicion, we must have no kind of grouse against it whatsoever.

Now I find that this World Bank has been given even more powers, supervisory and inspection powers, under this Treaty than even the Joint Indus Commission, which comprises representatives of both India and Pakistan. One may say that they are contributing the major part of the money, he who pays the piper calls the tune and, therefore, they should be allowed to do everything. But we are also paying; we may be paying less than the World Bank all the same, we are paying for works to be constructed in another country. We are contributing to that for a transitional period of ten years; but we find that it is specifically provided in the Treaty that India will have no right whatsoever in participating in the decisions regarding the construction of those works in Pakistan, none whatsoever. This entire power vests only with the World Bank and we accepted it without a murmur.

Then there is no provision, as I said, for any modification, even temporary, in the event of any kind of natural calamities which may afflict us. There is no provision either for any kind of review of the working of the Treaty and for necessary amendments in the light of any changed circumstances which may arise—there is one, to which I will come later, but that is wholly in favour of Pakistan and against us. A machinery has been set up. That machinery has been referred to here as two Commissioners, one representing India and the other representing Pakistan, who are to function as a Joint Commission. I would like to know one thing, in view of the talk which has gone on here about whether Pakistan has diverted funds from this Indus Basin Development Fund for other purposes, particularly for war preparations. Article VIII of the Treaty says that these two Commissioners who jointly constitute the Permanent Indus Commission will undertake, once in every

five years, a general tour of inspection of the various developments and works. I would first like to have this information from the hon. Minister. It is just a little over five years since the Treaty was signed. According to the obligations of this Treaty, during these five years, there must have been at least one—at least one—general inspection tour, a joint tour of the two Permanent Indus Commissioners, to look into all these works, to see how the development work is proceeding. Not only that. There is a clause which says that if either of the Commissioners makes a request, on that request this Commission will jointly and promptly undertake inspection tours of such works as may be considered necessary for ascertainment of facts. I want to know whether up to date, this joint Commission has ever met or not; if it has met, what are the reports it has submitted; has it ever undertaken this joint inspection tour which it is obligatory to make once in five years; if so, what is its report; if it has not done so, why not?

If anything is brought to his notice, our Commissioner can ask for a prompt inspection of any particular works in order to ascertain the facts. He is given this power. Has he ever done this? Has he ever had any occasion to make such a request; if so, what was the fate of such a request; was it acceded to, or turned down by Pakistan? We do not know anything about it?

I say these things for this reason that certain military works have been constructed along the Ichhogil Canal or anywhere else. I take it that they were not constructed overnight. What was our Commissioner doing? I do not know who that gentleman is, I do not want to be unnecessarily harsh on him, but I say that our Commissioner, not as a person but as an entity in this Treaty, has got certain powers and obligations. It is not correct, as the Minister said casually in the course of his speech, that these areas of the Ichhogil Canal are not available to us for inspection. They are available through our Commissioner, but we have no record as to what the Commissioner has done or what the joint Commission has done, what its report says, etc.

Personally, speaking for myself, I do not believe that it was necessary for Pakistan to divert money from this Indus Development Fund to construct a few pill boxes. Why should they do it? They are getting ample money for military assistance from other places, we know it. Do we think that people who can supply them with Patton tanks and Sabre jets cannot give them money to construct pill boxes and bunkers on the Ichhogil Canal? I am really distressed to find that the way an uproar has been created in the country, that this money has been diverted for that purpose, is really giving, in effect, an alibi to the military partners of Pakistan who have supplied it with things much more lethal than a few miserable pill boxes.

*** *** ***

Thanks for the clarification.* That only buttresses my argument that we have entered into some loose and undesirable clauses in this Treaty.

Nothing has been forthcoming so far which can be called evidence in the real sense of the word to show that this money has been diverted by Pakistan for unlawful purposes. If it has been done, it could only have been done with the collusion of the World Bank, there is no other way in which it could have been done, because the World Bank has got supreme powers of direction, inspection, control, management and so on. Therefore, we cannot have it both ways. If this thing has been done, if Government believes it has been done,—at least Government does not say clearly yet, they say they have no evidence—then we must see the World Bank, or these six countries which make up the World Bank for this purpose, in their true colours. If it has not been done, or there is no evidence, we should not go on repeating this parrot-like all the time and giving an alibi unnecessarily to these people who have supplied Pakistan with much worse things than pill boxes. They can easily supply them money for construction of pill boxes also. So, I am not prepared to ditto the Minister's statement, that everything in this Treaty is very fine and all that.

I may just point out that there is an emergency provision, which he should also have pointed out, because there I think we have had the luckiest escape of all. There is Article 10, the emergency provision, from which we had a very narrow escape, which says that if at any time before 31 March, 1965 (that means we escaped by about five months only) Pakistan tells the Bank—I am not quoting verbatim, I am paraphrasing—that because of the outbreak of large-scale international hostilities arising out of causes beyond Pakistan's control, it could not obtain the necessary materials and equipment for completion of these replacement works by the target date, which is 31 March, 1973—ten years plus another three years which are allowed on the basis of payment of some penalty to us—and if the Bank, after consulting India (it will, of course, be generous enough to consult us) is satisfied that Pakistan's statement is correct, then the Bank's good offices will have to be sought by Pakistan and India together for any necessary modification in the Treaty. It does not say "international hostilities other than any hostilities between India and Pakistan", but there was enough mischief in this provision,

* Referring to Dr. K.L. Rao's observation: "... I want to submit that quite a large number of meetings took place between both the Commissioners and the annual reports are laid on the Table of the House every year in June, and they have been laid for the last five years. Also, he will kindly see that according to the definition of works they cannot go to the canals. The only places they can see are the river works, because it is the rivers which we have divided among ourselves. Therefore, they cannot go anywhere to these canal works. That is why we have not gone to the Ichhogil or other canals. And then the treaty provides very specifically that India cannot question anything about these canals."

in this Article 10 for Pakistan to have utilised its recent hostilities to have come forward and said: "India has committed aggression on us, this is international hostility under this article 10; therefore, the World Bank should now come along and force India to agree to further modifications of this Treaty." Somehow, the time-table has gone wrong. I do not know whether originally some aggression was planned before 31 March 1965, by Pakistan.

*** *** ***

Nobody has got any illusions about Pakistan or Pakistan's record. We all know that and it can be repeated here *ad nauseam* how they have become almost professional law-breakers, that there is no single agreement or Treaty which has been made between India and Pakistan, which they have not violated partly or wholly at some time or other. We know that. It is also a fact that there are many things which go to show that they are nursing quite aggressive designs, with some sort of an eye on these waters also. You will find that Gen. Ayub* or Marshal Ayub—I do not know how he likes to be called—had made this statement publicly four or five years ago:

> "By accepting the procedure for joint inspections of the river courses, India has, by implication, conceded the principle of joint control extending to the upper regions of the Chenab and Jhelum and joint control comprehends joint possession."

This was the way he casually interpreted this thing before the Press at one time.

Then we had the recent aggression in Kashmir, and it is through Kashmir that some of these rivers flow, it is in Kashmir that they have their upper reaches. If the armed attack of the First Armoured Division of Pakistan had not been smashed in the Kasur-Khem Karan sector, it is a known fact, plans captured from the enemy showed, that they intended to cut the Beas at the Beas Bridge on the Grand Trunk Road, to seize the Beas right down to Ferozepore where the headworks are situated. From so many moves of theirs we can see that they have got their eye on the river courses and on the canals also. We have to thank our Armed Forces that at least this plan to seize the Beas Bridge and cut off the Grand Trunk Road, at that point was foiled.

There is no point in asking why they agreed to all this, because it is not possible to undo all these things now. The late Prime Minister, speaking in that debate, said here: "We purchased a settlement, if you like. We purchased peace, and it is good for both countries." That was the hope with which he did it. If he had been alive now, he would have been the first man to agree that his hopes have been thwarted by Pakistan's aggression.

---

*Referring to Gen. Ayub Khan, the then President of Pakistan.

It was admitted here by him that we had agreed to some very unpalatable things in the larger interest of getting peaceful relations stabilised between the two countries. Some members may feel that he was ill advised and some may also feel, as I feel sometimes, it is very easy to be wise after the event. Anyway my point is that there is a political question which arises. Although there are many things which are undesirable and in my view disadvantageous to India in this Treaty, can we now come forward and say that we should suspend it or that our obligations should be suspended or we should repudiate the Treaty; I do not know if anybody wants to say that. There are a number of amendments which call for suspension or something couched in a similar language. The framers of the amendment have probably not had the courage to be more blunt and open. But the amendments cannot be implemented unless it is done by the non-implementation of our obligations under the Treaty. I submit that it is not possible. I feel that some sort of a review of the terms of this Treaty are necessary. But it is up to the Government to make an assessment and review, in the light of past experience and also the recent experience and on that basis, if it is possible for them to move the United Nations, the World Bank and approach Pakistan too, when conditions are a little more normal—I do not think that anybody will agree to what we say now—to try and get some modification in this, although it is not permissible, within the framework of the Treaty, from what I can make out. We will have to wait at least five years for that.

Further, I am against any stopping of water supplies. Our enemy is not the people of Pakistan. One of the most noble war aims we have declared is that we are not fighting the people of Pakistan; we are fighting the military dictatorship which rules over them and the only result of stoppage of water supply is to turn that area into desert and stop whatever the poor peasants do there. That is not our aim in this war. Therefore, we should not go in for that kind of thing. And if I may say so, Pakistan has proclaimed openly on more than one occasion, the doctrine of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. This is the language of gangsterism in international politics. That is the language of people who have earned for themselves a name for breaking the laws all the time. We do not want to stoop to that level. Some Minister today has hit the headlines, I find, in the morning papers, and it seems that some members of the ruling party are very much on the warpath. I do not know what they said yesterday at their own party meeting. But one of them succeeded in hitting the headlines in a big way this morning. But I would request them not to stoop down to the same position of Pakistan and to indulge in that same kind of language and the same kind of behaviour which we are accustomed to see from Pakistan. Therefore, although I do not for a moment subscribe to what the Minister has said about the Treaty being wonderful and perfect and beautiful and so on—I do not accept that

argument—we have entered into that Treaty, and we cannot also prove that Pakistan has violated the particular Treaty. If that was a fact, despite everything else, I would have said that we could unilaterally violate this particular Treaty. We can certainly have then good ground for saying that we are not going to adhere to the Treaty. No such argument had been advanced. Therefore, in these circumstances, there should be no more talk of repudiating the Treaty or suspending our obligations under the Treaty itself. Government should at least devote some attention and thought, whether it is possible in some future date, if not just now, within the next period of five years, to secure certain modifications of this Treaty so that at least normal provisions are incorporated in it, in the view of the changed circumstances or in the view of certain special circumstances which may occur in a particular time there may be some scope for modification and review.

Mr. Chairman, this is neither a full-dress defence debate—it cannot be—nor a debate on foreign policy. I would remind the members that we are only five days distant now from the anniversary of that fateful day when the Pakistani Armoured Corps struck across the Chhamb-Jaurian border and at a time like this if we are to have this discussion at all, I feel strongly that it should have been on the basis of something more substantial than this statement which has been given to us. This statement** is totally unsatisfactory. This debate, I am told, is on this statement...

*** *** ***

Anyway, my point is that this statement, the initial statement, tells us nothing. It leaves us no wiser than we were before. This kind of statement might have been all right prior to 1962, but considering everything that the country and our people have passed through in the last four years and considering the experience we have had and the knowledge we have gained, even if it is layman's knowledge, I think, this kind of a statement does not do any credit to this House at all. It is not only unbalanced in the sense that it talks vaguely of the Pakistani build-up without giving us much material—whatever material we elicited later has not come from the Government; it was elicited by members of the House through repeated questions and various other ways—on the other hand, it says only in one concluding sentence:—

> "the House may rest assured that Government are alive to their primary duty of maintaining the security and territorial integrity of the country and will deal with any development according to the needs of the situation."

It is a perfectly useless statement.

Now, the Pakistani military build-up is going on and it is nothing surprising; it is nothing unexpected because we know that their attitude to Tashkent is completely negative and destructive. We also know that the influences that are playing still on Pakistan, whether of the United States or

---

* Participating in the debate on the Motion regarding the Situation on the Indo-Pak Borders; *L.S. Deb.*, 26 August 1966.

** Referring to the statement made by Shri Y.B. Chavan, the then Union Minister of Defence, on 1 August 1966.

of China, are basically hostile to India. Therefore, a build-up by them is nothing unexpected or surprising.

Of course, in Pakistan Ayub Khan* is telling his people every day about the Indian build-up. We read his statements too. He is telling Pakistan that India is doing a terrific military build up and, therefore, Pakistan has got to take measures to defend itself. I do not want that there should be a competition of this type of statements, to their respective countries, by Ayub Khan there and the Defence Minister here. We must have some facts if we want to discuss seriously anything. This statement tells us nothing new.

The new thing in the whole situation, different to what it was a year or a year and a half ago, is what is being briefly mentioned or referred to by some hon. members. The fact that replacement for the armour and the planes which were lost by Pakistan in last year's hostilities have been more than replaced by basically the same source of supply which was supplying them earlier, namely, the United States but by proxy—not directly but by proxy, either *via* West Germany or *via* Iran or *via* Turkey or *via* some other country—is what is new in the situation. But this statement does not contain that. Those facts had to be elicited here by calling-attention notices, questions and so on. Why it is not stated here is because our Government has got certain relations with these countries of the West like Germany and America and we are so busy taking aid from them and asking for more aid, more loans and more food supplies that we dare not say anything here officially which we think may upset them.

I do not understand what is the purpose of this statement at this moment. If the statement is made to create a feeling of confidence in the country, that despite anything that Pakistan may do we are more than well prepared to meet that, then that way also this statement contains no information whatsoever. Surely, it is not meant to divert the people's attention, as it were, from other internal problems. That will become a political motive then. So, what is the object of this statement? I fail to understand that. Or you must tell us that if Pakistan is doing these things, we are also doing something.

I take it that we are not sitting tight or idle and doing absolutely nothing, because if we are doing nothing and only they are building up, then we will get into another trouble at our hands for we have voted a very big amount of money for defence. So, either say what we are doing or do not say that they are doing these things, building up all these things and so on.

In 1962 we suffered serious military reverses at the hands of the Chinese and in 1965 to some extent we were able to make good the earlier shortcomings and lapses and managed basically to defeat the aggressive designs of Pakistan.

* Referring to General Ayub Khan, the then President of Pakistan.

That is true, but that does not mean that any of us have forgotten the serious lapses and the initial unpreparedness with which we were confronted even last year. We have not forgotten the fact that five days hence the day, which we are going to remember the anniversary of, when the attack was made across the Chhamb-Jaurian border by the Pakistani Armoured Corps there was no air cover and that our entire Air Force had to be diverted from everywhere else to Chhamb-Jaurian to halt that attack, to check it and to slow it down. We have not forgotten that when our Army crossed the Lahore border to make a diversionary attack, for several days in the beginning, there was no air cover whatsoever with the result that our forces went across the Ichhogil Canal and were driven back. We have not forgotten that the military transport system proved totally inadequate and we had to call all private lorry and truck drivers to come to our rescue. We have not forgotten these things.

We are not told anything about what is happening. We are not told whether those supplies from Britain particularly, which had been contracted for before the hostilities broke out and which included valuable equipment, spares and armour plates for the tank factory at Avadi, have been properly resumed or not. Have we received those or what is happening; we do not know anything.

We were told that this plate material was going to be made at Rourkela which will ultimately supply armour plates for tanks. I was surprised to read only two days ago in the papers that the Chairman of the Hindustan Steel Limited, is now proposing to make a trip to Bonn—the same Bonn which is supplying all sorts of things to Pakistan—to negotiate this problem of Rourkela plant's expansion—operation problems of the Rourkela plant—and credit facilities for the project to manufacture armour plates. It says:—

> "The need for technical personnel for this project would also be discussed."

After all this time it seems that the project for producing armour plates for our tanks is still at this stage. This is the position. Why should we not have misgivings then? We do not know what is happening. We are depending for this project on that same country which has been reported, without contradiction by anyone, to be supplying all sorts of things, including Cobra anti-tank missiles, tanks, planes, replacements and equipment for ordnance plants to Pakistan by means of some secrete agreement and which has allowed these jet planes from Canada to be diverted *via* itself through Iran to Pakistan in the ridiculous name of there being no overhauling facilities anywhere else. To that same country we are going now for a project for building armour plates in Rourkela.

We do not know whether the British who are supposed to equip the Avadi factory are standing up to their commitments or not. There are so many other things which I have not the time to say. All I am saying is that we would like at least to know, whether the losses that we suffered in tanks, equipment, planes last year have at least been replaced. I am not talking about building up further potential and all that, but whether those have been replaced or not, we do not know.

Then, what about the MIG project? How is it advancing? We do not know that. We suffered quite heavy losses in tanks. Everybody knows it. Have those tanks been replaced? We do not know that. We do not know anything. Therefore this kind of a statement is really quite useless.

*** *** ***

In the past on certain occasions Shri Chavan* has given us much more information than this. But I must say that if he gives this kind of statement, then it does open the way for suspicion to be created in some quarters that this is nothing but a means to divert the people's attention. I do not want him to supply unwittingly any ammunition to his colleague in the Home Ministry to say that while there is a big threat developing on the border, you people are going in for *bandhs*, strikes, *satyagrahas*, *morchas*, etc., and you must be repressed and suppressed.

Finally I will only say that if you are anticipating any imminent danger or attack from Pakistan, as far as it is possible to anticipate, please say so. I do not find any such perspective contained either in the Prime Minister's speech from the Red Fort on 15 August or in the Rashtrapati's address on 14 August; in fact, their emphasis is different altogether. Therefore, please tell us what are they doing, how far do you know about it and what are we doing. Unless these two are seen in proper balance and perspective, it is useless to have this kind of statement.

**Referring to Shri Y.B. Chavan, the then Union Minister of Defence.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as some of the hon. members have already remarked, it is a long time since we had a debate on foreign affairs and foreign policy in this House. Today, we are having it, although the attendance is not very encouraging. I listened very carefully to the hon. Prime Minister's introductory remarks**.

I know he wanted to concentrate mainly on the Colombo meeting. Nevertheles, since this foreign affairs debate is taking place not only after a long time but after a very critical new situation has developed, I was expecting to hear from him something about what the country's nuclear policy is going to be now. We have entered this nuclear capability era. We have now joined informally the nuclear club of those countries which have demonstrated their nuclear capabilities. This is a new thing for us. Now I would like to know from the Prime Minister, what is the Government's future nuclear policy going to be. But nothing has been said clearly about that. He has, of course, said that we do not intend to commit aggression on anybody. That is very good. We know India is not a country which goes about committing aggression, and certainly with nuclear weapons, we cannot commit aggression. These are weapons of mass destruction. These are not weapons in any case which you can use against anybody else and much less a neighbouring country. If you try to use them, then you are bound to get some retaliation. I find it very difficult to believe that when this Pokhran test took place, our Government and our scientists particularly were completely ignorant of the fact that Pakistan also has developed this nuclear capability. Is it possible to believe such a thing? We hold our scientists in great esteem. I do not believe that it was possible that when the Pokhran test took place, they did not know and they did not warn the Government that Pakistan is likely to retaliate. Within two weeks time it exploded its own nuclear device. The Government may say now that they were not taken by surprise. But I think they were taken by surprise. If they were expecting this to happen, then when we did our testing at Pokhran, some indication would have been given to the country. It is because instead of talking about India's great achievement we should have anticipated that Pakistan is also likely to do a similar thing and they did

*Taking part in the debate on Foreign Affairs and Foreign Policy; *L.S. Deb.*, 3 August 1998.

**Referring to the statement by the Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, on "SAARC Summit and Recent Developments Affecting India's Foreign Policy", on 3 August 1998.

it. So, what is the position now? Of course, in one sense, I feel, the possibility of another war between India and Pakistan—we have already four or five of them,—is probably a bit less now than it was previously. For, before these tests took place, wars were being fought with conventional weapons—tanks, guns, planes and all that, in which respect India, of course, is decisively superior to Pakistan. There is no doubt about it. This was one reason why Pakistan was also always trying to explain to the world that India is much stronger than Pakistan and they are likely to commit aggression against Pakistan and therefore America should help them, China should help them, and so on and so forth. But having exploded their own nuclear device or shown their capability to some extent as far as non-conventional weapons go, both the countries are now in a way more or less on the same footing because they cannot use these weapons against each other. Neither Pakistan can attack India with nuclear weapons nor can India attack Pakistan. These are weapons of mass destruction which cannot be used. The entire world came to this conclusion after Hiroshima. Yes, they can be used as a deterrent. I do not know what the main objective of the BJP Government is, whether they want to use it or they want to keep it as a kind of deterrent. Certainly, they do not wish to use it as a weapon of aggression. I am sure of that. Of course, this will not prevent the proxy war from going on.

I agree with Shri Shivraj Patil* that these weapons will not be used, but the proxy war which is going on at the instance of Pakistan, a low intensity war on our borders, specially in Jammu and Kashmir, may be intensified further. We have to be on guard because of that.

I want to know what is going to be our nuclear policy. We should be told something on this. This is the Parliament of India and we are discussing foreign affairs for the first time, after these tests have taken place. So, what is the nuclear policy of this country going to be?

As far as CTBT is concerned, from time to time, some statements are being made by various people that we may even consider signing CTBT or some aspects of CTBT, provided there are some modifications made. But it has never been clarified as to what those aspects are. What are those modifications which we would like? Up to now, as far as I know, Shri Jaswant Singh** who is roaming around the world, meeting his American counterparts and discussing probably this very question about CTBT, has not explained to us at any place or at any time as to what exactly we are trying to get out of the Americans before we agree to sign CTBT. I think, we should be told about it. As far as we are concerned, we are laymen and we have to

*Referring to Shri Shivraj V. Patil, MP.

**Referring to Shri Jaswant Singh, the then Union Minister for External Affairs.

come to conclusions on the basis of what we read. Even if we sign CTBT, perhaps, it is the refusal or reluctance of the Americans to part with certain very crucial technology which is connected with the CTBT. Naturally, if we sign CTBT, then we would like to have access to this superior kind of technology which all the signatories' States of CTBT should be in a position to share among themselves. I do not know if that is what is holding up the signing. I do not find any other clause in the CTBT which can be described as discriminatory. If there is one, I would like to be educated about it.

As far as the Non-Proliferation Treaty goes, it is clearly discriminatory. As far as the CTBT goes, I do not know if the terms of provisions contain anything which is discriminating against any particular country or countries. But I do find that, and I know what the Americans are like, they would not like to part with their technology which India, naturally would like to have. Perhaps, the negotiations and the bargaining which are going on at present, behind the scenes, may be connected with this thing. If we are informed something by the Government, then I would be very much obliged to know.

Then, Sir, in the statement made by Shri Vajpayee, at one place, he has said, "I took the opportunity in my interaction with other leaders to set at rest the misconceptions about our recent nuclear tests." He has not explained why there were misconceptions, what those misconceptions were, and which are the countries which were harbouring those misconceptions. We should be told about them. In what way did our Prime Minister set those misconceptions at rest and by giving what assurances? I do not know what he said because nothing is explained in this statement. He has said, "The Pakistani approach at SAARC was," what he calls, "a narrow segmented way of looking at things". This is what Pakistan always does. They try to narrow down all the discussion to the single issue of Kashmir, and naturally we resist that correctly. It is also the convention of the SAARC organisation that it will not discuss issues which are matters of dispute between member-countries and, therefore, Pakistan could not really get anybody to discuss Kashmir. So, the proxy war will, of course, go on.

Mr. Nawaz Sharif* is talking about the results being zero and being a waste of time because, from his point of view, unless the Kashmir issue is discussed and some decision is reached, it is a waste of time. That cannot be helped. The question is being mentioned here and I quote:

> "How do we judge now? How are we going to assess the effects of this nuclear testing which we did?"

Many hon. members in this House are always talking about how it has strengthened, how strong we have become now, and so on and so forth. I

* Referring to Mr. Nawaz Sharif, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan.

think that is the correct way. We should estimate whether, after these Pokhran tests *vis-a-vis* Pakistan, India has become stronger and Pakistan has become weaker. How is this to be demonstrated? I do not know. The way they are behaving on the border now for the last few days, carrying on unprovoked firing and shelling everyday, much more than they used to do before, killing innocent civilians, killing members of our security forces and the Army, is such that the Army Chief has had to rush there. He is there now along with other top-ranking officers and all that, working out measures on how to counteract this Pakistani attack which is going on. It does not appear as though they have been cowed down by the fact that we have got this weapon. Of course, it is partly due to the fact that they have developed the weapon themselves also. They feel that India is not superior to them in that sense. When there were conventional weapons only, then India was ten times stronger, perhaps hundred times stronger. I am not giving figures because of lack of time. The figures are here. If you compare our tanks, planes, artillery and other weapons with the same type of weapons that Pakistan has, we are 20 times stronger than them. But once that conventional weapons equalisation is ruled out, except for proxy war, it will not be of much use. Both of us are now back to the nuclear stage. Pakistan is behaving in such a way that it does not seem it has been cowed down and that it is in any way less bellicose or less belligerent than it used to be.

So, I would like to know from the hon. members here when they are being so euphoric about the alleged added strength which India has acquired, how exactly they are estimating or calculating this.

The hon. Prime Minister has also said:

> "During my talks with the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, I also emphasised that instigation and support of terrorism was incompatible with our own desire for friendly and peaceful relations and that these activities must cease immediately."

This is what the Prime Minister told Mr. Nawaz Sharif. But there is not a single sentence which indicates, what was Mr. Nawaz Sharif's reaction or response to this demand by our Prime Minister. I take it that Mr. Nawaz Sharif's reaction was negative. Either he must have contradicted our Prime Minister and said he has got nothing to do with this instigation and support to terrorism or he may have said, "I am not in a position to do anything."

But I am only saying and pointing out that there is nothing in the Prime Minister's statement except what he told Mr. Nawaz Sharif.

The global economic situation has been substantially transformed. That is mentioned. A substantial transformation of the global economic situation has taken place. This is true, of course. What will India gain from it? Is India

gaining out of that global transformation or are some other countries gaining at the expense of the least developed countries? That is a very important question for India with all its long history and tradition of standing up for the rights of the weaker nations and all that. We were the champions always of the weaker nations. Shri Lalu Prasad* has also mentioned it. Traditionally, we have been looked upon as the champions of the weaker nations, the Non-aligned, the Third World countries and so on.

Now, in this new global economic situation, there is no doubt that some powers, a few powers, which are very strong economically and financially, which have got multinational corporations based in their countries, are using this new global situation in order to threaten, and in some ways, to force, pressurise and coerce the lesser developed countries, the weaker nations who are naturally very much concerned about it. What is India's role now *vis-a-vis* this problem? I think we are so anxious to show our credentials to President Clinton** that immediately after the test, our Prime Minister goes and writes a letter to him, for which I do not think there was any need. Why was it necessary for the Prime Minister to re-assure President Clinton saying that what we have done is only because of China and if there were no threats from China, we would not have done this? It is a kind of a roundabout apology by saying: "Yes, we have done something which we should not have done. But what is to be done? After all, China is threatening us." Within a few weeks of that, we find President Clinton, on his trip to China, being so friendly with them, giving them so many concessions as far as economics, commerce and all that is concerned. Of course, we always thought that India is such a big market that the Americans and the other Western powers would not try to displease us because they want to make money out of our market. That is still true. But China is a bigger market. The multinationals are rushing to China. They are being welcomed there. They have established themselves there. And profits are being mounting up and up. So, what I would like to say is that this is not something which can be solved by just exploding nuclear devices. We should not give up the role which we followed consistently for so many years, from the time when we took to the path of Non-alignment and peace. I do not know if we can call ourselves Non-aligned now. But, in any case, since we are now a nuclear weapon State, we are in a position to speak up more strongly, I think, for the rights of the least developed countries, which are looking to us and whom we should also try to unite and to coordinate in common moves which can resist this pressuring by the globally advanced countries at our expenses.

... The Prime Minister has referred to his bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the Summit. As the main Summit was going on, he had some bilateral

*Referring to Shri Lalu Prasad, MP.

**Referring to Mr. Bill Clinton, the then President of USA.

meetings with the representatives of Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and so on. It is good. But as a matter of information, I am just wanting to know whether, for example, in the case of the representative of Bhutan, when he had separate bilateral meetings with him, they had at all discussed the question, what is reported and I believe it is true, that there has been a great stepping up in activities of the ULFA in Bhutan, inside the Bhutanese territory. Bhutan is a sovereign country. It is an independent country. It is a friendly neighbour of ours. Everybody knows it. The Government of India definitely knows that from the time when we were in the Government, we were plagued with this question: "Why do not you do something? Why does not India do something to see that these ULFA camps in Bhutan are removed? The ULFA insurgents, who make their way to Bhutan from the neighbouring soil of Assam, are creating all kind of problems there. The King of Bhutan was himself very much worried about it." We should do something because it has become a sanctuary and a safe haven for them, from where they are perpetrating all kinds of violence and atrocities in Assam. They are running across the border into Bhutan. Was it discussed at all with the King of Bhutan? I do not know about that. I would like to know about it. If they did not discuss it, it is a different matter. But it is a thing which is closely connected with our own security.

Secondly, with Bangladesh, I presume, the hon. Prime Minister had bilateral talks in all good faith with Ms. Sheikh Hasina* also. I do not doubt her faith. She had assured us, at the Government to Government level and at the Prime Minister's level, some time ago that she would not like the Bangladesh soil to be used by any of these insurgent groups from India to go and take refuge there, to establish bases there and to carry out anti-Indian activities from Bangladesh. It is very easy for them to cross the border. They are doing it all the time. But later on, we got some disquieting reports that for some reason or the other, Bangladesh authorities were not very successful in checking these people and controlling their activities or in seeing that their camps are closed down. They have got some weakness in their administrative structure and so on. What is the latest position in this regard? One very well-known leader of ULFA, Shri Anup Chettia has taken refuge in Bangladesh. He is wanted by us. Unfortunately, there is no extradition treaty with Bangladesh. But we would like to get the man like Shri Anup Chettia back here so that he can be tried for all the violence and crime which have been committed under his leadership. I do not know about the latest position. For some reasons, the Bangladesh Government is not finding it possible to hand him back to the Indian authorities. I would like to know whether this matter was discussed or not. I would like to know whether they are taking any steps to really stop the flow of arms and all that through Bangladesh which is

*Referring to Ms. Sheikh Hasina, the then Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

coming to our insurgent groups on the border. The Prime Minister has said that in these bilateral meetings, I had fruitful discussions on the progress in specific areas of cooperation. This is one area of cooperation which is of vital importance for India. I am sure, he must have raised this point with the King of Bhutan and Ms. Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh. If so, I would like to know what reaction did they give and what do we intend to do now about it.

FOREIGN POLICY AND OUR NATIONAL INTEREST*

Sir, for many years now, there has been a general consensus in this country—except for a misguided fringe, I should say—, there has been a broad consensus in support of the foreign policy that the Government of India has been pursuing, and I do not wish to spend time praising the positive aspects of that policy which are quite well known and which, I think, are certainly in the interest of this country and which, we have never hesitated in supporting. But, I think, today the global situation, which includes the situation in our neighbourhood, is far too serious, far too threatening, to permit of any vacillations and ambivalences on the part of our Government. About the extent of the threat and the danger of a nuclear outbreak, enough has been said here by many other members on both sides of the House, and I do not wish to take up time on that. It is not something which is just confined to words; it is something which has really become now a grim reality which, as the Prime Minister has rightly pointed out, has brought millions of people in almost all the countries of Western Europe on to the streets in unprecedented demonstrations, that is, the people of those countries who have been through the horrors of World War II and who know what it meants to have their towns and homes devastated. And one of those countries, though not belonging to Western Europe—but it is well to remember—is the Soviet Union which lost 20 million people in the course of World War II. There is no other country which can show such a tremendous extent of destruction and damage as the Soviet Union had to suffer from 1941 to 1944. Fortunately—I say 'fortunately', because not even their worst enemies would wish them such a thing—the people of the United States of America have not had occasion to taste firsthand the horrors of that kind of warfare directly on their own heads and on their homes. So, when we speak about some forces working for peace and some forces which are more interested in developing a warlike atmosphere, preparing for war, we should bear these things in mind. The common man of Western Europe at least, irrespective of policies, irrespective of parties or religious denominations, is now demonstrating in every capital of Western Europe because those people know what it means. According to Mr. Reagan,** if they get their first nuclear strike, the Soviet Union can be vanquished. I do not know what comfort these words are

* Participating in the discussion on the Motion regarding International Situation and Policy of Government of India; *L.S. Deb.*, 10 December 1981.

**Referring to Mr. Ronald Reagan, the then President of USA.

bringing to the people of Western Europe because they know that in the event of an outbreak of a nuclear war, whatever may happen to the Soviet Union or whatever may happen to many cities in the Soviet Union, the fate that will overcome the capital cities of Western Europe is something which naturally those people would not like to contemplate. It is a horrible atmosphere, a horrible situation, which has developed. My criticism of our Government is that, sometimes, they speak as though they are delinking this whole global crisis which has developed and the global strategies which are being pursued from what has happened in our own immediate security environment—as though it is something which has nothing to do with that. I do not think that is a very proper way and a very comprehensive way of looking at these problems.

*** *** ***

Our policy should be declared today in very unambiguous and categorical terms on these issues.

Before I pass on to one or two of them, there is just one event of recent occurrence. That is the only reason though it may not be a very global factor, but it is a very important thing for us in India, a matter of recent occurrence which I wanted to refer to, shows how this ambivalence, hesitation and vacillation affects the stand of our Government. An Air India Plane was hijacked from Seychelles and back to Seychelles. It was later on discovered that armed mercenaries who had come from South Africa and who had been recruited in South Africa were attempting to bring about a coup against the government of Seychelles. That coup, of course, failed; it was aborted. The plane was flown to South Africa, to Durban, and later on that plane was released and the crew and passengers were able to return safe to our country. If you see the reaction in a substantial part of our media, not only the unofficial media because I suppose the Minister has no control over that but even the official media, not a single word has been said in condemnation of this attempt by a group of mercenaries to overthrow the Government of Seychelles which is a small, tiny, little country situated in the Indian Ocean and I believe, with which we have got very good and friendly relations. Not a word is said about that. All that the media was full of, the radio was full of, the TV was full of, was a big, magnanimous and generous gesture the South African Government has shown by releasing the plane and the crew and the passengers so soon—as though we are under some kind of a debt of gratitude to them. Naturally they could not do anything else because it was their own mercenaries, mercenaries recruited in their own country and who had been sent in order to carry out that armed coup. Nothing is said about that.

I will remind the hon. Minister just for his reference, that on the 8 January 1982, the South African National Congress which has an office here also

situated in Delhi, is going to celebrate the 70th anniversary of its founding. People not only of South Africa but of all other African countries who have always looked upto India for support and leadership, many of them will be wondering, and I am told that many African diplomats in Delhi have wondered why the media has carried only such a positive response towards what the South African government has done by releasing our plane. The Chairman of Air India, Shri Raghu Rai has said in a Press statement that he is so much overwhelmed by the fact that these mercenaries, who took alcoholic drinks out of the store in the plane and helped themselves, have actually paid for the drinks. He has issued a statement—a good old British *pucca sahib* tradition, but not a word is said about the whole operation which was going to be carried out in the Indian Ocean. I am giving this as an example. As you see, we have got some kind of long, traditional and historical ties with the whole movement in South Africa. We must not forget that at times.

I am not clear yet and I do not know what the other members think of it, but what was the consideration which ultimately led our government to clear those British cricketers who have come here but who have been blacklisted for having played in South Africa? Of course, this is a controversial question and people say that these things should not be allowed to interfere with sports. But the point is that these are very sensitive issues for the Africans and the matter was being considered for several days here—whether clearance should be given or not to these cricketers to accompany that team and come here.

Then, it was cleared—I do not know how it was cleared—it is not at least clear to me. There was some vague thing, that somebody had issued a statement, some players issued some statement later on, saying that they hate apartheid, this and that. I do not know whether it will prevent them in future from also going to South Africa and earning money by playing cricket. But, that is a different matter. I am not bothered about it. But my point is that in our own interest, our image in the eyes of the South African people and the other people of Africa should not be suspect in any way. This whole incident of Seychelles, the attempted coup and the way we got into raptures over the fact of the South African Government's release of our plane, in a very gentlemanly way, as also our passengers and our crew and their mercenaries having actually paid for the drinks to them on board—is this the kind of reaction that they expect from us? I do not know it.

I would request the Minister to look into these things and be a little vigilant in future about the ambivalence. Many months ago, we were debating the Anti-Apartheid Bill in this House and I was the first who raised the question. The cricket team was to come. Please think about it from now as to what you are going to do. Anyway, we have our own way of functioning. So, what has happened has happened.

Now, Sir, about this question which has been dealt with here in great details by the hon. members, namely, about the operation of arming Pakistan and the building up of the arms strength of Pakistan, I have not really got much to add because almost everybody here except Shri Jethmalani* seems to be of the view that these arms, these sophisticated weapons, the aggressive weapons and all that cannot, logically, be used against anybody except India. Of course, in that connection, he spoke about the so-called offer of non-war pact. I am fully in agreement with the Government. It is a ploy. There is no doubt about it. You cannot go on building up enormous military potential and, at the same time, talk about the no-war pact. I do feel that the public opinion in this country has not been sufficiently educated and made conscious about our stand regarding this because, on the face of it, many people say what is wrong with this if they are offering a no-war pact. Why should our Government dismiss it out of hand? What is the harm if we really can enter a no-war pact? Everybody is not so sagacious or wise as our Prime Minister of Shri Narasimha Rao. Among the ordinary people in this country, there is a big Muslim population and I can tell you that among many Muslims, this propaganda is going on that here is Zia-ul-Haq's** offer of a no-war pact, while this Government, the Indira Gandhi Government, is trying to create a situation of hostility between the two countries. All sorts of things are being said by the people. I think the Government should, by and large, more often do some explaining in the matter, explaining to the public, the real facts behind this which influence them. Recently, I am glad that the Government has said that they stand by their original offer which was made long ago and that they stand by that. But, on the basis of the bilateral settlement of disputes, at the time of the Simla Agreement, this was what had been discussed. The whole question of Kashmir need not be brought up again and again in the international forums. The matter could be settled perhaps. But, as far as the building up of their armed forces, I am glad that some other members also have noticed that General Haq himself is on record as saying that the Soviet Government had assured him that it had no intentions against Pakistan whatsoever. Gen. Zia-ul-Haq had said that he had no possible reason for disbelieving them. Then, what are these arms for? I just want to briefly make a reference because it is always better to go to the horse's mouth and get things directly from there. I am just giving two or three quotations which are on record. These are the official documents circulated by the American Embassy, the Communication Agency; they are very efficient in this matter. I must say that I am very thankful to them that they supply us with all these in details. But I shall be very brief. On 31 July, the U.S. Secretary of State,

*Referring to Shri Ram Jethmalani, MP.

**Referring to General Zia-ul-Haq, the then President of Pakistan.

Alexander Haig, giving testimony before the Senate Arms Services Committee, had said the following in one part of his testimony. I am quoting:

> "We are attempting to convince our friends in South-West Asia that we are a reliable and capable security partner, serious about defending our vital interests in their region in partnership with them."
>
> U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean, our efforts to improve security relations with Pakistan, and the generally expanded security assistance budget requests for South-West Asia are examples of this."

So, the way that the Americans are looking at it is very important. And here again, I find, on 25 August, the text of the United States' Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick's address at the India International Centre, New Delhi, when she came here. It is very important to quote what she said. I quote:

> "We believe, indeed we know now, that India's own military strength has increased very dramatically in the period since the last Indo-Pakistan war, so that India is today one of the world's major military powers. I think it is estimated that India is the fourth largest military establishment in the world. It is our estimate that any arms sales that we provide to Pakistan do not threaten the security of India and that is why we undertake that policy. We think, in fact, that we introduce an element of stability rather than of instability. That is our perception of our policy."

So, this is the logical reason why they are arming Pakistan because, they think that there is an imbalance. Obviously what they are trying to say is that there is military imbalance. In West Europe they talk about imbalance; they say Soviet Union is superior, and therefore they must build this up. Here the suggestion is that India is much too superior over Pakistan. Therefore, the imbalance should be restored by arming Pakistan.

*** *** ***

... Now, after so long, we have concluded this 5,000 crore loan agreement with IMF. But there is one thing according to Mrs. Kirkpatrick which India should learn from certain 'dramatic success stories' of whom? Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong. We should learn from them! And what are we to learn? I quote:

> "These countries have experienced the most dramatic growth and have achieved self-sustaining growth, cooperated with the industrialised West and sought a partnership based on close cooperation and mutual advantage. Rather than imposing command economies, on captive peoples, they have emphasized market forces, free trade, and individual initiative. Where others have sought to make the State."

—that is to say, like our public sector—

> "...the motor of economic development, they encouraged the private sector through tax concessions to both corporations and individuals."

So, this philosophy, which is the philosophy of the IMF, also is something, which we have now swallowed hook, line and sinker, in order to get Rs. 5,000 crore as loan.

Then, finally, I just want to mention one more quotation. And this is from James L. Buckley, Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance. He was speaking on the 16 September at another Committee of the U.S. Congress. And he says this. He was referring to some commentators who have expressed fears that their proposed sales to Pakistan will spark an arms race in the sub-continent. He goes onto say:

> "Those fears simply do not stand up under analysis. India possesses a very large, well-equipped, well-trained military establishment that provides it with a decisive superiority over Pakistan in the air as well as on the ground. Given the large number of advanced aircraft which the Indians already have or will receive from the Soviets and Great Britain, they will emerge, six years from now with an even greater edge over the Pakistanis, notwithstanding the addition of 40 F-16s to the latter's inventory. In fact, they should then have an advantage over Pakistan, in terms of modern fighter aircraft, of about six to one.
>
> These hard facts should dispel any notion that the equipment we would provide Pakistan would upset the balance of power on the subcontinent."

Lastly here again, now our friend Mr. Alexander Haig who is due to visit Delhi in another 4 or 5 days' time, has said in his testimony on US Foreign Policy Goals:

> "Security assistance to Pakistan, which lies between the Soviets and the Gulf is also crucial. The invasion of Afghanistan places Pakistan in the front line of defence against Soviet aggression. These pressures have not deterred Pakistan from courageously leading the condemnation of the invasion by the U.N., the Non-aligned Movement and the Islamic Conference. Nor have they stopped Pakistan from agreeing to a new relationship with us. Indeed, President Zia has personally conducted a vigorous public campaign for renewed U.S. ties throughout his country. We must show that this confidence is not misplaced."

I think these quotations are enough. I could have given many more to show that the concern which everybody feels in this country is not based just

on some kind of vague misplaced fears. Whatever the regime in Pakistan may choose to do, one cannot say anything because it is a military regime, but it is quite obvious what the Americans want there and they have made a theory that India is vastly superior to Pakistan already in military matters and therefore the balance should be corrected and restored by them. So, there is no question of fighting here against the Soviets or trying to defend Afghanistan. Afghanistan does not want to be defended by Pakistan. I can assure you on that. I was there recently last month for a few days and I had occasion to speak to many Afghan leaders and also of the Government and I asked them "do you not think that your own armed forces, the Afghan armed forces, now with the armed militia—they have got armed militia in the factories, villages and all that—deal with these intruders from across the borders?" And they told me, even Mr. Karmal* with whom I had a few minutes' conversation, told me, "Yes, we are capable of dealing with them." Then I said "in that case why are you troubling your Soviet friends? You could ask them to leave." And he said, "Yes, we could ask them to leave" and he said "personally if you ask, I think they would be very glad to leave because their being here is not helping them. It is helping Mr. Zia-ul-Haq, it is helping the Americans and other people who have got good propaganda advantage". And because of this propaganda advantage they don't want them to leave, they would like them to stay: so that they can carry on this international propaganda. But he said: "Suppose we request them and they go, who will guarantee to us that after that, our country will not be bombarded and will not be attacked. There are 80 training camps across the border." We were shown from the top of the hill near Jalalabad—you can see the camps on the other side of the river.

And gentlemen like Gulbuddin, people who have fled away from Afghanistan long ago, who are now living in Peshawar, visiting nightclubs and riding in American limousines, well flushed with money, who are supposed to be the leaders of the so called insurgents—he said—if that attack comes what will happen? If we are bombarded, what will happen? We will have to call back the Soviets again; if they have to come back again after having been withdrawn, then there will be war on our soil. This is something that we have to think twenty times about. So, what is being said is quite correct. There must be a settlement. Certainly these troops should be withdrawn; they will have to be withdrawn and they must be withdrawn, just as our troops had to be withdrawn from Bangladesh. We went there with all good intentions but you know what the reception of the people was there later on? We went there at the request of a Government, a Government which at that time was not based on Bangladesh soil at all, it was based somewhere outside Bangladesh, but we went there because it was a good cause, but we

* Referring to Mr. Babrak Karmal, the then President of Afghanistan.

had to withdraw and we withdrew. So, this will have to be withdrawn also, there is no doubt about it. But the conditions must be created for that and I think our Government and the Prime Minister had taken a reasonable stand on this because when the proposals were brought to Delhi by the Afghan Foreign Minister Dost Muhammed, not so long ago, in which he said "we are ready to sit down and talk any time with anybody, with Iran, Pakistan, in the presence of the United Nations representatives. But let us sit round the table and decide and see how the conditions can be created so that the Soviet forces can be withdrawn". Nobody wants them to remain there. We do not want that; you do not want that. Afghanistan is friendly to us; the country and the Government is friendly to us; it is not a hostile Afghanistan; not another base like Pakistan directed against India. We do not want that such a country should be left at the mercy of attacks from outside. It is necessary to take a balanced view of this. Why should the Government go on vacillating on other questions which are much clearer? They would go on talking about super-power rivalry. May I know who has sabotaged the move which was going on, to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace? Who sabotaged the conference which was to be held earlier in Sri Lanka this year? Was it the Soviet Union? In today's newspaper I read that Shri Rao has yesterday assured the visiting Foreign Minister of Egypt that India stands squarely for the Arab cause and that there can be never a lasting peace in this area, until the rights of the Palestenian people are ensured. That is very good. But does America stand for that, or has the Soviet Union supported consistently the cause of the PLO? Who stands for them?

Now-a-days, a new theory has been propagated from our Foreign Office and that is that the world is no longer uni-polar; it has become multi-polar, and, therefore, India must strike a golden mean of the Third World. Some people have interpreted it to mean that we should be neutral in all these issues, neutral between the forces working for peace and the forces working for war, and go on tarring them with the same brush and say that both are responsible for all these crisis.

The Supreme Soviet of USSR, that is, their Parliament, had addressed an appeal to all the Parliaments of the world, including our Parliament. I do not know if there has been any response, whether we feel like making any response. Now a delegation of the Soviet Parliament is in Delhi and is shortly to meet our members of Parliament. They have issued an appeal to the whole world, Parliaments of all the world, on the basis of certain concrete proposals. These proposals have been made time and again by President Brezhnev* also. It is not necessary that we must necessarily accept everything they say. But is it not a peace initiative? Has not Mrs. Gandhi yesterday, when receiving

* Referring to Mr Leonid Brezhnev, the then President of USSR.

Mr. Kuznetsov, said to him, as reported in today's newspapers, that she values very highly the peace initiatives taken by Mr. Brezhnev, and that they are completely in line with the thinking of the Indian Government? She says this to Mr. Kuznetsov. This is very good. But our Foreign Affairs Ministry and all its official documents and statements will go on talking about the two super powers together creating a situation which is very threatening. What is the use of this tight-rope walking? It is not going to help. You are afraid that if you say something, you will be accused by Shri Ram Jethmalani and his friends of having become a Soviet stooge. In any case, even if you do not do this tight-rope walking, you will be accused of this. He and his friends will accuse you of that, but you should not be worried of that. You should only be worried about what is good in the interest of our country, in the interest of our security, in the interest of our friendship with those countries which have stood by us and helped us always; you should not be afraid to recognise those people who are doing things which are not in the interest of our country.

Therefore, I conclude by saying that we, generally speaking, support the foreign policy of the Government, but every now and then there are these ambivalences and shifts. When Mrs. Gandhi went to Paris and met Mr. Mitterand*, suddenly she developed this theory of golden mean, of being neutral between different camps. Nobody wants you to be a camp follower of anybody. We have first and foremost to decide on the basis of our own national interest. And from that viewpoint we should not hesitate to say whose actions are helping us and whose actions are harming us. This is necessary. Without doing that, we will not be able to really recover our prestige that we enjoyed, I think, much more some years ago. And I would end by appealing to him again that nearer home, much smaller people than the Soviet Union or the United States of America are looking to us, particularly, the coloured people of the African continent. Don't keep forgetting them every now and then like this, by this careless kind of lackadaisical little action here and there. They are very sensitive people about these matters. Let them at least feel, on the 70th anniversary of the South African National Congress on 8 January, the warm glow of the support and solidarity of India behind their struggle. That is what I would like to say. I hope they will be more consistent in future in implementing their policy which generally is all right and which I do support.

---

* Referring to Mr. Francois Mitterand, the then President of France.

Sir, I do not agree with the view that everything that has happened in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) is to be painted as black, nor do I agree with the view that everything that has happened there is to be painted as white... I would say that the compulsions of the world events and the compulsions of the crisis which is palpable before the eyes of the people of the world, which is bringing closer and closer a terrible threat, have compelled in this particular Conference, CHOGM***, 'silence' on those people, those members of the Commonwealth who are themselves accomplices in precipitating this crisis and bringing this war-danger nearer. They did not have the courage here to speak up as to what actually is there conviction. Public postures have been struck here which will be repudiated in private. I know that. It is a fantastic thing; Mrs. Margarat Thatcher** is herself a partner of the United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in allowing the missiles to be put on her soil; we do not expect her here in this particular company to speak up in defence of that; she could not have spoken up in defence of that, because the whole world opinion is going against this, certainly in India. But we cannot forget that she represents a Government which is carrying out this very dangerous job on behalf of the Americans.

A Government which is hand in glove with the racist regime of South Africa—could she have said it here in Delhi, in India with our long record of fighting for the rights of the South-African Blacks against this horrible racist regime and Apartheid? She could not open her mouth here. Does it mean that she has changed by coming to Delhi or by relaxing by the side of the blue waters of the beaches of Goa and now she will go back and take up a different policy? We should not hoodwink ourselves. This is the composition of the Commonwealth. The only thing I like about the Commonwealth is that it is a forum where many people play cricket. I like that, because I like that game. I do not know yet why we should continue all these years and why should we continue to accept that the Queen is the head of the Commonwealth. I do not understand.

---

* Participating in the discussion on the Present International Situation and the Policy of India in relation thereto; *L.S. Deb.*, 6 December 1983.

** Referring to Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, the then Prime Minister of United Kingdom.

*** Referring to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held in New Delhi from 23 to 29 November 1983.

Can this Commonwealth last without India? I ask you. If India ever decides to get out of the Commonwealth, what will be left of the Commonwealth? Obviously nothing will be left. The old white former Dominions of the British Empire will be left. And all the other countries which were former colonies are here only because of this huge country of India. Otherwise, there will be nothing left.

What I wish to say is that if the Government of India is conscious of the strategic place that we occupy in this Commonwealth—the indispensability for the existence of the Commonwealth, is the membership of India—I would like them to come out. But if they want to continue, they should at least utilise their strength and their power inside the Commonwealth to insist on certain things and not take shelter always behind this hypocrisy called consensus. This is escapism. We have spoken out, our country, our Government, our Prime Minister have all spoken out against the invasion of Grenada. Grenada is a Commonwealth country. It is not any country, it is a part of the Commonwealth family, a little country with $1^1/_2$ lakhs of people. The Grenada was occupied and invaded by an American military force, and this Commonwealth Conference does not have a word to say about the American action. Shri Narasimha Rao said and he has been quoted in big headlines in the Press that the decisions and resolutions of the CHOGM reflect the viewpoint of India. Do they?... How do they reflect the viewpoint of India?

High tributes were paid to the Candian Prime Minister, Mr. Pierre Trudeau who is referred to as a venerable statesman. But Mr. Trudeau is a confirmed votary of the non-proliferation treaty to which we do not subscribe and he has offered the American facilities in Canada for testing of their missiles because Canada has a lot of open space. How do you expect such people to speak up here on these points? But we ought to have spoken out and we will continue to speak. Our Government has spoken on this and taken a firm stand and should we not say that.... if they are not able to reach agreement on such important issues on which the future of humanity depends, then let at least India's position be recorded that India has a different standpoint? Why cannot this be done? What is so sacred about this Commonwealth that always takes shelter behind consensus? If we record our viewpoint, will the whole Commonwealth fall to pieces or what?

Just now I find that the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Hawke*, Prime Minister of Australia, on returning to his own country made a statement in the Australian Parliament saying, why should the Israeli forces get out of Lebanon until the Syrian forces also get out? 'They should both get out.' He

*Referring to Mr. Bob Hawke, the then Prime Minister of Australia.

is equating the two. He is equating the Syrian Arab Army which is there in some strength in Lebanon with the Israelis who committed unforgettable repression last year in Lebanon and committed all sorts of atrocities on the people there, including killing of thousands of people in the refugee camps. Mr. Hawke was here in the Conference. I was in Australia less than two months ago and I found that Mr. Hawke as Prime Minister, had been going back on the decision of his party, the Labour Party in Australia, which, when it was in the Opposition, had adopted a policy decision that they would not allow the mining of uranium ore in Australia, which is being mined and exported and obviously, it was going to be used for some nuclear purpose. That was the policy decision of the Labour Party. When they won in the elections and when M. Hawke became the Prime Minister, he had gone back on that and is leading to a very serious repercussion inside the Labour Party itself. He says that our uranium ore can be mined and taken out of the country. So, what I am saying is this. About the economic part of the New Delhi meeting, I do not want to say much because, in the statement made by the Foreign Minister, he has himself admitted that there is some disappointment with that part as if the rest of everything is all right. Only that part is not upto our expectation. I do not know what was the expectation when many of these people were participants of the Williamburg Conference. Did they not take a certain stand at the UNCTAD VI Conference regarding this problem of what we call 'the struggle for a new international economic order'? It is a question of an International Conference that NAM had called for to reform the whole economic, financial and global structure. Have they supported it? They were dead opponents of all these things. I am only worried that our Government, in the name of consensus, is going along all kinds of wishy-washy, hotchpotch documents which have been produced; the sharpness of our stand for which we are respected and admired in the World, particularly, by the countries of the non-aligned world, gets blunted; the clarity gets obscured or blurred. I do not like this. I do not say they have surrendered or anything like that. These are harsh words to use. Why should I say that? Did they think of some means? Now in Cyprus they have taken a good stand. I do not know what would have been done if President Kyprianou* had not been able to come to Delhi. He was able to give a good Resolution which was adopted on Cyprus. Now I would like to ask about the Islamic Conference which is going on in Dacca. Now what will happen if the government of Bangladesh which is playing host to the Islamic Conference, and the Government of Malaysia or Government of Maldives which have agreed to something here, when they go there to Dacca for this Islamic Conference and if the general tenor of that Conference is to support the Turkish regime for setting up an Independent State there in a part of Cyprus which they have illegally occupied, will not that position be ludicrous as far

*Referring to Sypros Achilleos Kyprianou, the then President of Cyprus.

as CHOGM is concerned? I just want to say one thing and I will finish in five minutes. A lot of hullabaloo has been made over the fact that the countries of the Caribbean—small countries—had asked the United States to take military action against Grenada. They supported the U.S. This was what was said by the Prime Minister of Dominica. I have no time to quote but, I am sure, our External Affairs Minister might have seen it. There is a speech and I could quote it. I won't. It has been made by the Chairman of the CARICOM—Caribbean countries—an organisation called 'CARICOM'. Mr. George Chambers, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago—perhaps, he came here also—in a speech made before the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago on the 26th of October, just a day or two after the attack on Grenada that took place, he categorically said this. I may quote one paragraph only :

> "I would like to state that the first official notification, I, as Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and current Chairman of the CARICOM, received of the landing of forces in Grenada, came from the United States Embassy in Port of Spain, through the Minister of External Affairs several hours after the actual landing. I wish to state further that up-to-date I have received no notification from any CARICOM member country of any intention to request assistance from the Government of the United States to intervene militarily in Grenada; nor have I been informed by any CARICOM member country that such a request had in fact been made."

This is what he says. All these things have been cooked up later on by some people under American pressure to say "no, no, we asked you to go there. We supported your action". This calls for stronger condemnation here. If they did not agree—the other people—we should have made our position clear. Why not? What will happen?

As far as the new international economic order is concerned, there is no demand even made for it in this economic document of New Delhi. It can't be with these people around. Please compare the Delhi statement on economic action with what I suppose is a moderate kind of utterance made by the Secretary General Shridath Ramphal and I quote:

> "A particularly distressing feature of the last two years has been the tendency of the U.S., the world's richest nation, to distance itself increasingly from the generosity and enlightenment which marked the high point of its internationalism. It has cut back on aid for even the poorest nations. It has hindered efforts to improve world liquidity. It has pursued domestic policies without much concern for their effects on world economic recovery and it has led the resistance to a coordinated approach to global recovery."

*** *** ***

Sir, one thing more I would say finally on this Commonwealth business. We have a long connection. Isn't it? It is supposed to be a Commonwealth connection with the old days and with the old regime. I think that we are still suffering from some kind of a complex—excuse my saying so—*vis-a-vis* the British and it comes out in little things. I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether it is not a fact that for the last two years our Government has been trying to make the U.K. Government and U.K. High Commission here accept that the British Council, which is their so-called cultural department here, must not be allowed to function as a separate independent organisation but should become a part and parcel of the High Commission itself. This became necessary because those British citizens who work in the British Council, the question of their paying taxes—double taxation in England and India—arose and our Government told them if you want to avoid double taxation then you must become part of the diplomatic staff of the U.K. High Commission. In that case the British Council cannot function as a separate thing. It must become part of the High Commission. I want to know have they accepted it upto today? They have not. I have a proof here. In the newspapers so many advertisements are being published in the name of the British Council—commercial advertisements—selling tickets for various kind of shows: A charity premiere of Heat and Dust. It is a film. The Taj Group of Hotels and British Council present on Friday the 14th October at Chanakya theatre. That means they are functioning independently. Who allowed them? Look at the films which are being shown. One is called 'Helen, Queen of the Nauch girls'. Then there is another one called 'Autobiography of a Princess'. I do not know whether all these films were shown here. They are importing films duty free.

Here is another advertisement: Siri Fort Auditorium, Asian Games village, October 8. The British Council presents 'Yettis'. Tickets for Rs. 50, Rs. 25 and Rs. 15. And this is done in collaboration with the soft drink called, 'Thrill.' These people are doing anything they like. They are not prepared to accept your pre-conditions and conditions.

Did you raise this with Mrs. Thatcher? Or, because of the fear of offending the great, white queen, we kept quiet? He must tell us.

Finally, Sir, I will say this.

I am sure the Minister also shares the great concern which everybody is feeling at the escalating situation. In the Middle-east the drums of war seem to be beating again now and Mr. Hawke might like to equate the Syrian forces with the Israeli forces but nobody in his commonsense will do that. I do not know what is going to happen. The attack has begun. And it is said that the Syrians have no right to fire on United States' reconnaissance planes flying over the Syrian air space. I don't know what is the international law. Suppose every day reconnaissance planes fly over Indian air space,—Pakistani

planes or any other planes—are we not entitled to fire at them? And because of that, they want to retaliate by attacking the Syrian positions on the ground for which they have paid the price of having two or three of their planes shot down also. But this is a very serious state of affairs and we would like them to tell the House something by which we will know that our Government along with other Governments has been making strenuous efforts in that region to bring about some kind of disengagement and peace. And also there is the question of the PLO. It is unfortunately tragic that the PLO has suffered some sort of an internal split. And I know he went there with some attempt to bring about some reconciliation and all that. Perhaps it is this split in the PLO ranks which is further encouraging Mr. Ronald Reagan to strike at this very moment. He is taking a calculated risk. It is a risk which may escalate into something beyond anybody's control. It does not follow that war will break out only where the missiles are being kept. War can start from any other place and therefore, it is a very serious situation. We would like him to tell us frankly what they think of this deployment of missiles. Do they go on talking like others that it is very unfortunate that the Soviet Union walked out of the Geneva talks? It is very unfortunate; but it is even more unfortunate that while the talks are going on, what was the great hurry for the U.S. to go and put their missiles in West Germany and Britain? Could not they have waited till the talks concluded? So, this is a situation of reckless adventurism and the Indian Government must make its position clear and call a spade and we know who is responsible today for creating this war crisis which threatens the world with destruction. Thank you.

Madam, after many years I am noticing—I do not wish to be misunderstood—that in this year's debate a note of anxiety, of misgivings I should say, to some extent, is being expressed by many members from both sides of the House. And this is not anything surprising. While it is true, as the last speaker** said... and I congratulate overall policy the country has been following, the overall policy of non-alignment, of standing for peace against war, for disarmament and so on, remains in-tact and everybody supports that, but, after all, we cannot go on simply repeating from year to year, the broad contours of this framework because within that framework the Government has to act on specific issues, it has to react to specific situations. And during the last year, I think, there is a feeling of some inconsistency, I should say, some vacillations, some illusions, that are creating this undercurrent of anxiety which is being rightly expressed here. I think the basic cause of this anxiety is the fact that a year ago or so, an unreal atmosphere of euphoria was sought to be created about our relations with our neighbours.

Now it is appearing suddenly as though we have suddenly got a shock and come to earth, that things are not turning out the way we thought they would. I think the initiative in foreign policy does not consist entirely as Shri Tewary*** sought to make out of visits to different countries by our Prime Minister. That, of course, is of no doubt. But to create some kind of illusion or euphoria about progress towards a good neighbourly policy in this regard is not correct. Because, we have missed out certain realities, refused to recognise certain realities which of course many members are now here expressing. This good neighbourly policy towards our neighbour is very important from our own national interest and the point of view of our security. If you go through this book which has been given to us and if you read between the lines, the policy is lying in shambles, and everyone here has spoken about it. The plain fact of the situation is that the two immediate neighbours with whom we have tried very hard to improve matters, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, are becoming more adamant in their hostilities. They are not relenting. They are not thawing under the charm of our Prime Minister or the personal relations that they may have with him. The reason for it should

* Participating in the discussion on the Demands for Grants (General), 1986-87; *L.S. Deb.*, 24 March 1986.

** Referring to Smt. Meira Kumar, MP.

*** Referring to Shri K.K. Tewary, MP.

better be recognised once for all. Shri Tewary hinted, I find myself in agreement with him surprisingly on many of these points. The problems presented by these two countries have acquired global dimension. That is the main point. With Pakistan, it is so obvious of course, one does not need to dilate on it. But in the case of Jayewardene's* Government too, the fact of the matter is that they are being supported and encouraged from behind the scenes—(Pakistan, not so much from behind the scenes either)—by those very powers, those Western powers.

*** *** ***

Well, to some extent, yes; you are right, from what evidence is there. They are being supported. They are not masters of their own situation. Many facts have been cited here by members about how these powers are operating for their own interest, using Pakistan and Sri Lanka for their own purposes. Some small facts I just wish to add to the collection that is already there. President Jayewardene's son Ravi is currently in Israel now. He is incidentally the Security Adviser to the President of Sri Lanka. He personally led the Security Forces in the eastern region against the Tamils. These things are on record, they may not be available in our Press but if you study International Press and listen to British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and so on you get lots of information. He is in Israel at the moment but he is on a mission because he is apparently the main negotiator for arms purchases from South Africa, from Israel, from the UK, from China. Reference has been made to the fact that when the Seventh Fleet appeared off Karachi—we were accustomed to it appearing in the East—but this time it appeared in the West off our shores. It is apparently for the innocent pastime of allowing several thousand and odd group to enjoy recreation and rest facilities in Karachi city. At what price to the citizens of Karachi, I do not know—that will be known later on. But at the same time Pakistani naval vessels and Chinese vessels were visiting Colombo. It is not I, but this book which talks about "growing military nexus" between Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It is stated explicitly that there is a growing military nexus. It is a very serious thing to say and should be explained to the Parliament of India in a little detail, on what evidence, on what facts the Government of India is making such a serious allegation in cold print, there is a growing military nexus—that is a very serious matter—between these two countries.

Madam, recently the Chinese President, Zhao Ziang, visited Colombo, and he is reported to have told President Jayewardene that he had come there to express Chinese solidarity with Sri Lanka against the designs of a sub-continental super power.

*** *** ***

*Referring to Mr. Junius Richard Jayewardene, the then President of Sri Lanka.

The Security Minister of Sri Lanka, Mr. Atulathmudali, has told in an interview to the British Broadcasting Corporation that within six weeks the Tamil problem in the eastern region will be solved and after that they can deal with Jaffna. You have seen, no doubt, yesterday's report in the Press that the Finance Minister Mr. Ronnie de Mel has announced the allocation of an extra 100 million for defence spending this year to help combat Tamil militants. I do not blame the Government for trying to bring about some negotiations to try to get peaceful settlement and all that, but for Heaven's sake, do not spread illusions about all this. Sri Lanka is a small country compared with India. True, but behind it stand big powers who are trying to use Sri Lanka for their own purpose and the more this turmoil goes on within that unhappy Island now, the more killings and this genocide go on, perhaps it will become easier for the external forces to secure a foothold in that Island for obvious reasons. So, it is not only Mr. Jayewardene who may be a problem for us, but also other powers may become by proxy our neighbours, off our shores. It is better we talk out plainly about this, we are not doing it adequately, in my opinion. Even in the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations we are not able to get any response. Why is it so? Why are we isolated on this issue? Nobody speaks for us in the councils of the world, on this question of the killing of Tamils in Sri Lanka. We are very proud of this non-aligned fraternity of which we have been the leader and all that, I think it is a big force in the world today, but where is our diplomacy and where is our skill which can at least get voices to speak on our behalf on this issue? It can only be done if they realise what is going on, what is the real game behind all this, because certainly the non-aligned countries of this region are not very happy at the fact that this creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean is being indefinitely delayed. They want it as much as we do. But do they understand what is happening in Sri Lanka? They understood Diego Garcia well. But do they understand what is going on in Sri Lanka? Another Diego Garcia may appear tomorrow on the soil of Sri Lanka. Do they understand the significance of the appearance of the Seventh Fleet in Karachi? So, we have to do some more active diplomatic campaigning—shall I say? Some lobbying, some work, some hard work and not like the one last year at the time of the Thimpu Conference. There was such an atmosphere of euphoria you created, as though things were coming and going in our way because of your wonderful personality and charm and all that. Therefore, today many people got let down and they can't understand, what is happening, why suddenly we have been reduced to this position. So, Madam, I would say that we are being out-manoeuvred. We are being out manoeuvred. This is a serious matter. I may support the general policy of this Government but I cannot support inconsistencies, weaknesses, vacillations and contradictions which are creating problems for our country.

About Pakistan, I do not want to say much because much has been said about this. But in the case of Pakistan even about this talk which took place between President Zia and our Prime Minister, it was stated that an understanding had been reached about not attacking each other's nuclear installations. What has happened to that now? There is no agreement. Nothing is put on paper. Nothing is signed because later on Pakistan insisted that this understanding must be made part and parcel of that no-war pact which they were proposing. So, nothing has come out of even that. That is not much of worth anyway because whose word you would believe. But anyway, there is nothing. So I should say, really if you ask me what is the solution I cannot tell you in one word. Obviously, we are not going in for military intervention in Sri Lanka. I hope we cannot go to war with Sri Lanka because it would be the most disastrous thing, not for them but for us. Therefore, shorter than military intervention, we have to take much more initiative, much more positive steps and firm steps, in the comity of nations. That is all we can do. Give whatever help and relief we can to these unfortunate Tamil people, as lakhs of them have to run away from Sri Lanka, and now they have to be sheltered on our soil. And it is creating so many problems. I don't think President Jayewardene understands at all that there is an ethnic problem or he does not want to understand. Ethnic problem does not exist for him. It is a question of terrorists, who are disturbing the peace and law and order in his country and, therefore, they must be put down through a military solution. It is so simple, as far as he is concerned. Therefore, in order to do that, he must go to various quarters to get assistance. That is the way he is looking at it. But where are our other friends and nations throughout the world who will understand our point of view and exert pressure—moral pressure, political pressure and diplomatic pressure—on the Government of Sri Lanka? The Government of Pakistan, I believe, is beyond the capacity of being moved by moral pressures. So, we are in great difficulty. I think, no doubt, difficulties have increased greatly.

*** *** ***

I have so many things to say, particularly about the Foreign Minister's reported remarks—some of them—during his visit to U.S.A. for the meeting of Indo-US Joint Economic Commission. I would like to ask him for clarifications. If they are not correctly reported, he should say so categorically. For example, in the meeting, Mr. Patric Moynihan asked about India's voting record in the United Nations and alleged that we are continually voting with the Soviet Union. Apart from this being an insult, a way of asking explanations from us for this kind of thing. Shri Bhagat* is reported as having said that he will look into the record? Why should he look into the records? We are not anybody's servants. We are free to vote as we like. It is not the business of

* Referring to Shri B.R. Bhagat, the then Union Minister of External Affairs.

Mr. Moynihan or anybody else to ask explanations from us. As an independent, self-respecting country, we do not owe explanation to anybody, even if Shri Bhagat had gone there to negotiate a 500 million dollar collaboration deal. That does not mean that we have to give explanations about our conduct at the United Nations.

On Afghanistan, it seems he was asked in the Press about what he considers to be a solution for the Afghan problem. Well, we have spelt it out on many occasions, the Government I mean, to define well the position. In the Press, it is reported, he said about Finlandisation and the Australisation of Afghanistan. I do not know whether the reports are correct. They have appeared but they have not been contradicted. Therefore, I am having to raise them. If Finlandisation and Australisation are dirty words, we should not use this kind of dirty expression. We should spell out our stand which is quite clear.

There is also a report that the Americans were charmed by the assurances given by Shri Bhagat, of course, not in his personal capacity but as representing the Government. With these assurances, did the Americans agree to give up their earlier objections and hesitancy to supplying us with certain types of equipment and technology which they had refused to give and refused to give to any deploying country? What were those assurances? I would like to know what sort of assurances they were. As far as defence equipment is concerned, I can understand. They may say there are so many spies roaming about in India nowadays that any country would be a bit concerned as to whether Ram Swarups and so and so would get hold of defence secrets. Whenever we ask here about the equipment that is to be purchased, we are assured it is nothing like that. It is for monitoring the weather or doing something, rather super-computers for monitoring the weather. What assurances have been given which suddenly melted the hearts of Americans? I would like to know.

There is a report also, by the way, that night vision equipment for the armed forces, goggles and other equipment which are required by our tankmen and our infantrymen, when they move at night, some deal has been struck with the famous multinational company the International Telephone and Telegraph Company (ITTC) of USA, which I think has a rather dubious record of what it did along with CIA in Chile a few years ago, in overthrowing the elected Government of President Allende. It was ITTC, whose sordid role in that affair came to light. I do not know whether you are simply purchasing equipment from them or you want to bring them here to set up some kind of facilities, or what you want to do. But I say, be on guard. Be careful with these people. Otherwise, your foreign policy itself will be subverted when there is too much flirting because with this type of multinational companies, you are opening the gates a little too wide now.

About inconsistencies, I must say one thing. We are always talking, and rightly talking, about our uncompromising and total opposition to apartheid in South Africa, and we have been propagating the need for a comprehensive and total boycott of all manner of relations with that racist regime in Pretoria. I think the entire country stands behind that policy. Now here I got hold of documents, including the photographs, published in *Business magazine*, which shows that, you know there is a very flourishing diamond industry in South Africa, diamond mining and diamond cutting, and Indian Businessmen Delegations, who deal in diamonds, from Bombay, two names are mentioned here, Shri Madhukant Bhukanvala and Dr. H.J. Modi, the first Indian diamond industrialist to go to South Africa. How they have gone, how did they manage to go, so many photographs of receptions, given to them, of the meetings held by them with their counterparts in South Africa and Ministers have met them and so on. This was sent to me by some South African gentleman—I do not want to name him—who ends his letter by saying 'Disgustingly and sadly yours'. Why these secret contacts are being allowed to be maintained? For economic advantage or for what purpose? You must find out how these things are happening some time. A few weeks ago or a few months ago there were reports in our Press of our Arya Samajist's delegation being allowed to go to South Africa. When we asked about it, we were told that that was some sort of a cultural exchange because the Arya Samaj is active there also among the Indians who are South African Indians. Does it mean that total boycott of the apartheid regime excludes cultural exchanges? What does it mean? I cannot understand. If we want to maintain our credibility in the eyes of the African people—not only in South Africa but in the whole of that continent, then we must plug this loop-hole. I do not know who is responsible for it. Whoever is responsible should be taken to task. I am prepared to hand over these papers to the Minister. Let him find out how these people are being permitted to go and enable our critics to dub us, the hypocrites in the world. I know the Government is solidly against apartheid. They must see that their whole official machinery and so on is upto the mark and does not permit this kind of thing to go on because everybody knows nowadays that for money anything can be done in this country. Corruption is running right in every quarter of our national life.

So, I do not wish to take any more time. I only wish to say that in Sri Lanka and Pakistan a very, very serious situation has arisen and we must think afresh how to behave, how to act, and how to intervene. If they are going on a global scale, we must also go on a global scale. But at least we should be realistic and we should not spread illusions and we should not spread a euphoria that because of Indian diplomacy and skill we are winning around these people, who are actually playing a different game and outmanoeuvring us with the help of certain powers.

THE TERRITORIAL WATERS, CONTINENTAL SHELF, EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE AND OTHER MARITIME ZONES BILL, 1976*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I welcome this Bill. But it gives rise to some very interesting implications and questions, which, I hope, the hon. Minister will clarify and reply to when he replies to the debate.

To some extent the Bill is, of course, in conformity with the consensus which has been arrived at already, though not formal agreement, but consensus of agreement, on the question of territorial waters and particularly exclusive economic zones. But to some extent I see in this Bill—I don't disagree for that reasons, but I see this—that this is a sort of pre-emptive measure. Because, as far as I have understood it, the conventions which were adopted at the previous Conferences on the Law of the Sea in 1958 and 1960 have not yet been actually finalised. That is the reason why a third Conference is now taking place. But it seems, as Shri Jagannath Rao** has pointed out that the matters are not so easy to reach agreement on and conference after conference is taking place on an issue which has become at the particular moment important, not only from the point of view of security. Considerations of security must be there and those considerations hold good always. But security considerations have now undoubtedly been overshadowed by the question of sovereignty. Science and technology has brought home to everybody the fact that beneath the waters of the ocean and on the sea-bed itself there are tremendous riches available in the form of raw materials, minerals and so on, not to mention oil. So, I agree with some speakers who have said that while we definitely should take this pre-emptive action in order to assert our sovereignty as we consider it very legitimate, so we should voluntarily place a limitation on it to that extent only that it should not in future, involve us in any kind of conflicts or disputes with that family of nations of which India is also a member.

I do not want to say that there are no disputes between non-aligned nations or between developing nations. There are some disputes as we know very well relating to the Law of the Sea. Such disputes may arise from time to time.

---

* Participating in the debate on the Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and other Maritime Zones Bill, 1976; *L.S. Deb.*, 17 August 1976.

**Referring to Shri Jagannath Rao, MP.

But more important than those disputes are the common interests of all the developing countries, the non-aligned countries, the countries which over the last 25 or 30 years have won their national independence from colonial powers. That should be the paramount consideration.

I think the concept of a 200 mile territorial limit has been more or less accepted. But, it has not been finalised in terms of some specific treaty. Naturally, if such concepts of territorial limits, territorial waters, contiguous zones and exclusive economic zones are accepted, eventually to the extent that they are accepted it also implies a sort of shrinkage of the open seas. To that extent, the open seas will shrink and that shrinkage of the open seas has got further implications for certain countries and certain powers, of course, who may not like the idea at all. That is very obvious and, perhaps, this is one of the reasons which lie behind the conflict or the disagreements which are obviously surfacing between the developing and non-aligned countries on the one hand and the imperialist countries of the former colonial countries which were holding the colonial empires on the other, many of which are very powerful military powers which have got powerful naval forces at their command.

This exclusive economic zone is a concept which of course is vital now for the developing countries. There is no doubt about it. With that rider, I would like to ask that question which has been asked—how are the interests of the landlocked countries going to be safeguarded? We have got landlocked countries as our neighbours with whom we have got very good friendly relations. There is Afghanistan; there is Nepal; there is Bhutan and so on. We also know that by virtue of these being landlocked countries, certain problems regarding transit of traffic and so on already exist between us and Nepal, for example, with which we have continuously been trying to have friendly negotiations and talks for some mutually amicable settlement. So, we have to bear in mind this one point; there must be some scope; some latitude must be there in whatever laws we frame to provide for the legitimate interests of those landlocked countries which are our neighbours and with whom we have and with which, we hope, to continue our friendly relations.

Sir, in this Bill, it has very correctly been stated that the right of innocent passage is the only thing which we can concede through these territorial waters, which rules out the concept of any free passage, particularly of course, in the case of warships of any kind, whether they are surface vessels or submarines or other under water vessels. For India, this is a matter of particular importance in view of what is happening in the Indian Ocean areas. I do not need to elaborate on this. Diego Garcia base has now become operational, we are told; we are reading in the papers every day and we remember what happened in 1971, during the Bangladesh conflict and so on.

So, there can be no question of free passage. Though the rights of free passage are demanded by certain powers, in the interests of our own security, in the interests of our national defence, it is essential, as the Bill has made clear, that the only right that can be conceded is the right of an innocent passage and, to the extent that some powers insist on going on proliferating the military bases in the Indian Ocean or building up their navies, their naval strength, it becomes all the more important for us to emphasise this question of innocent passage as against a free passage right.

I would like to know from the Minister, because I was not able to ascertain quite conclusively, whether or not, it is a fact that the United Nations General Assembly, in 1968, had declared some sort of moratorium on the exploiting of sea bed resources between technologically developed countries and undeveloped countries is really a matter of acute conflict of interests. And this probably could be the most difficult thing to solve. I think a Declaration was made at the United Nations that the mineral wealth, particularly of the sea bed, should be treated as—the words used—a 'common heritage for mankind' and, therefore some sort of a Declaration was made about the moratorium on the exploitation of these minerals until a final agreement was arrived at.

A proposal was made about setting up of a Sea Bed Authority. Now, what is the position regarding that? And what is the view of our Government regarding that? It seems that certain powers are anxious that even if such a sea bed authority comes into force, it should have minimal powers and not be invested with very many powers whereas other countries like ours or the developing countries, would like perhaps such a sea bed authority to have adequate powers to ensure that no country unilaterally, by virtue of its superior technology and resources is able to try to appropriate some of these sea bed resources for itself. What is now the position regarding the sea bed authority proposal? I would like to have some clarification from the Minister.

Then there is the question of right of other countries to carry on scientific research in the exclusive economic zone of another country—of course, with the permission of that country. There can be no question of doing that unilaterally. I do not know what is the thinking of our Government on this question. I would certainly not recommend very much that we should give permission easily to foreign powers to come into our exclusive economic zone on the plea of carrying on scientific research because these are methods and modalities by which nowadays all sorts of things are done and all sorts of dubious and doubtful operations are carried on by certain powers in the name of scientific research.

This 200 mile economic zone will impose naturally on any developing country, including India, enormous problems also which I hope the

Government has fully considered. Here is our country with an enormous long coastline and once we have defined our position and given it a statutory form, then the whole business of maintaining a mechanism for coastal vigilance in order to guard the inviolability of our economic zone means something which is really quite a stupendous task, calling for tremendous resources which I do not know whether we have yet been able to acquire. This problem of maintaining vigilance along the coast also implies acquisition of sophisticated under water technology for purposes of exploration and exploitation. Would not these aspects—the question of vigilance and the question of technological resources to exploit this economic zone—present problems which we have already had to encounter? We had some experience in regard to the question of checking the smuggling operations, particularly on our western coast. We all know the volume of smuggling which was taking place from Abu Dhabi. I have no doubt that it is still continuing but on a reduced scale. In between we were faced with the problem of acquiring a few hover-crafts. Even that had presented enormous problems of finding funds and foreign exchange for acquiring these hover-crafts and so on. Once we have stated before the world through statute that this is our 200 mile-economic zone, this question of vigilance will present a very big problem from the point of view of resources. As far as the technological capacity to exploit that economic zone for our own benefit is concerned, we are now actively engaged in offshore exploration and drilling for oil, and we are still at the stage where we have to rely, to a great extent, on foreign technical assistance for this purpose, which we hope we will be able gradually to overcome.

You will recall that last year when there was a question of demarcating zones in the Bay of Bengal within which we would carry on our exploration or drilling work and Bangladesh wanted to carry on theirs, also some difficulties and problems arose as to how to appropriate one part of the Bay of Bengal to them and one part to us for this purpose.

*** *** ***

It is a question of maritime boundaries. All these questions are involved. So, I hope that when we are going in for all this, the implications will be properly considered and the obligations that follow from this in the interests of our own national security and development will not be avoided but will be boldly undertaken.

As far as pollution hazards go, Shri Jagannath Rao has spoken about it. Nowadays anti-pollution technology at sea has developed considerably and is developing very fast and we should have to insist that these anti-pollution technology standards and so on should be applied rigorously to all vessels

which pass through our territorial waters, that means not only foreign ships but our Indian ships also: I do not know to what extent the Indian merchant marine fleet has reached a stage of development where it is able to utilise this latest anti-pollution technology. It is all very well for us to insist that foreign ships should take necessary precautions, but we must see to it that our own vessels also are not found lacking in this respect.

One clause in this Bill has provided for offences by companies which I think obviously refers to the question of pollution from land-based companies which very often discharge all sorts of effluents into the water causing pollution hazards. Penalties are prescribed for such offences and so on. 'Companies' means, I presume, any company which is doing business in India, whether it is an Indian company or a foreign company or whatever it is. There is no distinction. So I take it, this covers everybody. But in the case of foreign governments which may violate any of these clauses or provisions of our statute, what will the position be? It is not international law yet—that is my point. This is not yet accepted universally as international law. Any breach of international law by any country is normally dealt with, in a particular way. But when we are introducing our own statute and law and some other country chooses, for whatever reason, to violate our exclusive economic zone or territorial waters or anything like that, what sort of situation will we be confronted with and how do we propose to deal with it? From what I have understood also, there is this possibility even between the best of friends of disputes arising over the question of fishing rights. We know there are so many big disputes over fishing rights taking place in so many parts of the world: Mexico and Alaska, Newfoundland and so on. We know what has been happening. There are some countries which go in for largescale maritime fishing very near their own coasts. They are so situated with the geographic and climatic conditions that the bulk of the fish catch they make is very near to their own coastal waters. But there are other countries which are also leading maritime countries in the world which do not catch their fish very near their coasts but far out in the open seas, which rely mainly on long-distance fishing fleets equipped with what are called mother ships, factory ships and all that. They stay out in the open sea for months together and do their fishing. The catch is transferred to the mother ship, processed in the factory ship which stays out and then after a long period these catches are brought back. This question, I think, has also given rise to certain variations in the attitudes of certain countries and powers towards these definitions from the point of view of their self-interest, whether their fishing wealth is located adjacent to their immediate coastal waters or they are countries who catch fish at longer distances. It is this which determines the varying attitudes of countries. It is very difficult sometimes to define these things because there are so many species of fish which have migratory habits. They may be

feeding and breeding in the shallow waters adjacent to our coast, but they migrate seasonally and go out into the open seas, where anybody can catch them and you cannot say, "it is our fish". The fish move from one coast to another in a sort of lateral direction also. We have got such countries as our neighbours also, where this problem may arise.

The fact is that there is a tremendous potential lying untapped. In fact, our country is one of the most backward in this respect. We have not been able to tap the immense potential lying there. We should see that once we codify these definitions in our statute, it implies that we should try to make some good use of it. Actually fishing near the coastal waters of our country, for example, would not be a very attractive proposition to distant water fleets. They do not come near our coast; they catch fish in the open seas. But we should be on our guard. Nowadays technology is moving in such a direction that powers which usually indulge in distant water fish catching can, with the help of the mother ship, factory ship, etc., come very close to the coastal waters of other countries and carry on fishing, specially when that country concerned is somewhat backward in its development of fishing capacity by modern means.

All these questions arise and they are very interesting. I have no doubt that as time goes on, we will have to face new problems and adjust ourselves, and perhaps even adjust our laws accordingly. Shri Jagannath Rao asked about historic waters. I had also noted it down. There is no definition of historic waters in law. There is mention of historic waters, but nothing has been said as to what is meant by it. You may not specify it in the Bill here, but the Minister should tell the House what is his concept of historic waters.

It is probably a happy coincidence that Parliament is discussing this Bill at a time when the Colombo Conference* is in session. I saw today in the papers that Mrs. Bandaranaike** in her inaugural address also has referred to the fact that this historic gathering of the heads of non-aligned governments should also discuss this question of the Law of the Sea and attempt amongst themselves to come to some common ideas, some common outlook on this question. It is very important. I hope that at the Colombo Conference India also will take some initiative in the matter and try, for example, to evolve at least as far as the non-aligned community is concerned, some sort of mechanism for settlement of disputes which may arise out of the Law of the Sea between ourselves. There are friendly neighbouring countries, countries with a colonial past, with the common objective of independent economic development, which are faced with new threats and pressures exerted by

* Referring to the Fifth Conference of Non-aligned countries at Colombo in 1976.
**Referring to Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the then Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.

neo-colonialists and imperialist forces. At least among themselves they should try to evolve some machinery for the settlement of disputes which may arise from time to time among themselves, arising out of the Law of the Sea. Also, I hope they will try to evolve some methods by which there will be better co-operation in the settling of these maritime boundaries. As I mentioned the case of Bangladesh and India, there are so many others. These are questions which the non-aligned countries can settle very well among themselves without waiting for anybody else. They can evolve a machinery for the settlement of disputes arising out of this Law of the Sea, a machinery for co-operation among themselves for settling maritime boundaries and mutual co-operation, which of course will not fructify overnight, for the beneficial transfer of technology among themselves, which is most important because technologically most of these countries are still far, far behind the advanced countries, and that is where we are at a disadvantage, but we cannot always safeguard our interests simply by putting down laws on paper. Laws on paper have to be backed by resources and technology which will permit us to really assert our national sovereignty and our rights against the more powerful Powers. So, there should be some arrangement also for beneficial mutual transfer of technology among these non-aligned countries who, after all, have got such great identity among themselves which is bringing them together in this great Conference which is taking place now.

With these words, I support the Bill and hope that I will get replies to some of the questions which I have raised.

Sir, the people of the world are confronted with an international outlaw, and it would be idle, of course, to think that they are going to change their policy or their stance easily. Let us, for the time being, not speculate, Sir, on what is going to be the impact of these sanctions on which the six Commonwealth nations at Marlborough House decided recently. Today, at 12 O'clock, I think, radio news has broadcast that after going back from London, the Canadian Prime Minister has said that, if necessary, they will severe their diplomatic relations with South Africa and recall their Ambassador. They still have their Ambassador there. But any way, the point is that the international outlaw, whom we are fighting or trying to fight, is extremely powerful. We all know that. And the source of that power is the economic support that they are getting from their friends abroad. There are 1068 transnational companies who have their affiliates in South Africa. These are the United Nations figure. 406 of these companies are based in the U.S.A.; 364 are based in the U.K.; and 142 are based in the Federal Republic of Germany. The total direct foreign investment in 1983 was between 15.5 and 17 billion dollars in South Africa, mainly in mining, in petroleum, in automobile industry, in chemicals, in electronics, in the banking and the financial services. Companies like Ford, General Motors, Diamler Benz are dominating the automobile industry with their plants in South Africa. In oil, Mobile, Caltex, British Petroleum, Royal Dutch, Shell, the French company Total are controlling and owning 80% of the retail outlet of oil and three of the major refineries in South Africa. So, they are all tied up along with the Western Supporters, their entire economy.

Arms manufacture and arms import are going on despite the United Nations ban and despite the embargo. Here, I would just like to remind the House that we must be very careful as one of the leading nations in this struggle.....we must be very careful. You will recall a few years ago, we had sold some of our old centurion tanks. Whom we had sold them to, I do not know—some private party perhaps, some of those private arms dealers. But some of those Centurion tanks later on appeared in South Africa. So, we have to be very careful when we move in this matter because the end-use of these things must always be verified.

* Participating in the discussion on the Motion regarding present situation in South Africa; *L.S. Deb.*, 7 August 1986.

Similarly, I would like to tell the Minister that now our total opposition to apartheid should not be in any way diluted or diminished by any, even a small thing like the reported link that we have got with the diamond trade in South Africa–India should not. And we should cut off unconditionally and comprehensively any kind of direct or indirect ties. This Hindustan Diamond Company of Bombay in which your Government holds 50% of the share, while the other 50% is held, indirectly controlled, by nominees of the De Beers company, which is the biggest diamond mining concern in South Africa and employs the Black workers and treats them like slaves. They are operating here through two of their nominees. One is their Bank of Bermuda which is the subsidiary of De Beers and the other is the Diamond Trading Company of the U.K. which is controlled by De Beers. There is no reason why South Africa should be allowed indirectly even to operate in the diamond trade on our soil through their nominees. This leaves a bad taste in the mouth and I would like to request the Government to take steps to see that this whole thing, this whole chapter is closed.

Last year, Sir, I had shown photographs in this House of some of the directors of this company in India, who had gone to South Africa to meet their partners in the diamond trade there and how they were being feted and given reception and all that. It leaves a very unpleasant taste in the mouth and it should be completely closed now.

They have a nuclear programme also. As you know, they have a uranium enrichment plant at Valindaba which is supposed to produce plutonium, enough to make two or three bombs a year. Some people have said that they have already got stockpile of some 25 to 30 atom bombs, we do not know. They have the largest concentration of gold reserves in the world. It is another source of their strength. 51% of the world output on gold is in South Africa and, you know the power of gold in the world.

Because of these things, it is going to be a very long and difficult time and to the extent that we have been able, within the Commonwealth, to make some advance in London, we are, of course, happy and we congratulate the Government for the role that it has played there.

But I would say that we are, of course, for a peaceful solution. No doubt abo··t it. But does it mean that we are against non-peaceful solution? It does not mean that. It cannot mean that. And I may say, I do not want to go into the details, but a few years ago, when the victorious leader, Mr. Samora Machel of Mozambique was here as our honoured guest, speaking at a banquet in Rasthrapati Bhavan, where I happened to be present, he made a reference to the fact that when they were fighting for independence in Mozambique, that organisation was then known as Frelimo, he noted the fact that Frelimo

fighters, the guerrilla fighters of Frelimo, were carrying in their hands some weapons which had come from India also. I do not want to say anything more than this but we have a duty. We have a responsibility. We need not shout about these things from the house-tops. We are for a peaceful solution. But we cannot be against a non-peaceful solution when the people of South Africa have been forced ultimately to take up arms in order to fight for their freedom. Let us remember that, because Mr. Nelson Mandela, as the American newspapers have reported, they have put out the whole story as to how he was betrayed by the CIA. He was arrested on information supplied to the South African Government by the CIA and there was a mutual tie-up between the CIA and the South African Secret Police. The Americans were informing the South Africans about the movement of these African leaders who were compelled to go outside their country, and South African Secret Police was informing the Americans about the presence and the movements of Soviet and Cuban troops in Angola and other frontline States. So, they were working as a partnership. This was responsible for the information which was given to the South African Government to trace out and find Mr. Nelson Mandela and to arrest him, as a result of which the tallest leader of the South African liberation struggle is now languishing in jail, for how many years, we do not know, and along with him so many others.

So, all I have to say is that the Minister will tell us now because they are going now further to the Non-aligned Conference in Harare, of all places. It is a good thing. The Non-aligned Conference is going to be held in Zimbabwe and this question will come up there in such a way that it will have to be taken due note of. All that we have to do is that we must move forward and take some further steps.

*** *** ***

I think the role of India has been very praiseworthy up till now but we should push forward further and see what strong steps can be taken. It is good to carry Australia and Canada with us so far and I hope that we will be able to keep them with us. They are countries which have got multi-racial and cosmopolitan populations now. The days of white Australia are over now. We should be able to keep them with us and we must move forward so that the isolation of Britain is absolutely total and more positive steps can be taken to see that the South African struggle is helped.

USING NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY FOR PEACE*

Sir, I share the sense of solemnity on this occasion because this month of August marks the 29th anniversary of the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The explosion of two bombs resulted in over one lakh people being killed; 60,000 or more demonstrably injured and many thousands more infected by radio active poison—some of whom are dying or their children are dying even to this day.

So, it is appropriate that on an occasion like this we are debating this new milestone which we have reached in our own development of nuclear technology, making it clear before the world that our purposes are entirely peaceful and not militaristic or belligerent in any way.

Sir, we should be quite clear on the essence of the achievements that our scientists have recorded. I am not a scientist but as far as I have understood the first aspect of this achievement is that we have mastered the technique of separating plutonium from the burnt up uranium fuel rods. This was only possible because we had one laboratory scale breeder reactor based on uranium 235 in this country. Thanks to the foresight of Dr. Homi Bhabha. This reactor enabled our scientists to separate the plutonium.

The second achievement which has already been mentioned is the technique of being able to bring about an underground nuclear explosion without any hazards or radio active fall out. These are the two things that have been done on May 18 at Pokhran. These are things for which all of us as Indians, should congratulate our team of atomic energy scientists who have really demonstrated that based entirely on their own skills and knowledge and resources they have been able to bring our country to this position.

I do not want to strike a discordant note but it seems to me that we still have got a long way to go before the underground explosion can be successfully used and practically applied for things like trapping of deposits of oil or gas or breaking up low grade non-ferrous metal ore deposits. The question arises in a layman's mind: why is it that countries which are technologically far ahead of us and which have carried out nuclear explosions running into hundreds have not been able till today to utilise—to my

* Participating in the discussion on the Atomic Explosion conducted by the Atomic Energy Commission; *L.S. Deb.*, 8 August 1974.

knowledge it is so; hon. Minister can give us information on this particular technology. We are not talking of nuclear technology in general; we are talking of the technology of blast or explosion for such purposes as diverting the course of a river or finding out underground mineral deposits and so on.

Of course, one argument can be given; perhaps they were not interested in this possible use and they were interested only in making weapons and therefore they did not do that. I am not convinced by this argument because if that is something which could be effectively done, I do not understand why the countries which are today facing such acute energy crisis, for example the United States, would not go in for this experiment. Once they were talking about building a second Panama canal with the use of nuclear explosions across their land. They have not been able to do it. I came across this argument: may be they are not interested or they are interested only in making bombs. I think the answer is not as simple as that. I should prefer to infer from this that the transition from a mere experimental underground nuclear blast to the actual, practical, effective use of this for peaceful development purposes is perhaps a very big leap forward and if our scientists are able to show the way in this field—it is not something which can be done easily, overnight—I think that we can claim that we have become the real pace-setters of human history. Trail blazers as you, Sir, correctly say. I think the Government of India should take up this challenge and should give all possible help and encouragement to our scientists to make attempt in this field.

I share the views expressed by Mr. Samar Guha, MP, that the security arrangements in this country do not inspire confidence, generally speaking. We come across so many things which are raised in this House from time to time. There was a big furore over the alleged theft of uranium from the Judugada plant in Bihar. Now that we have reached this stage, we should see to it that security arrangements in our atomic energy establishments are tightened up considerably so that there is no possibility of any theft or sabotage.

There is a political aspect, with which I want to deal briefly. The hullabaloo which has been created in all countries of the world following the May 18 explosion is obviously not because India has got some nuclear resources or has set up some power stations. That we have been doing for a long time. The commotion has been provoked by the fact that for the first time we have joined that group of nations who have got the capability of setting off an explosion or blast. That is the new point of departure. Everybody knows that essentially this technology is no different from the technology of making a bomb. It is quite obvious. The same technology which produces an underground blast can be used for making a bomb. Therefore, we find all

sorts of reactions abroad, some of them hypocritical, coming from quarters who have no business to say those things about India, when they themselves have been indulging all these years in all types of nuclear tests, not only underground but in the atmosphere till the other day, as we have seen. I was studying some of the world Press reactions and some of them were very peculiar and amusing. For example, in Japan, one view was put forward whether a nuclear country can be considered any further as a developing country, meaning that the question of giving economic aid and assistance to India as a developing country should be reconsidered because, after all, can a country which is nuclear be considered as a developing country any more? In Australia I came across this view: "The Indian explosion has changed the entire *status quo* in the Indian Ocean region", as though we have already decided to go in for some sort of nuclear weapons! One heading in an Australian newspaper was, "Indian blast has reactivated the Canberra atom bomb lobby". I do not think we bargained for all these things either. Curiously, in China, one paper said, "Indian test was encouraged by the Soviet Union" as if the Soviet Union from behind was prodding the Government of India to carry out this test. This view was immediately contradicted by the Indonesians who have commented that India's nuclear capability will help it to reduce its dependence on the Soviet Union. Both of them cannot be true. A very influential newspaper, *The Observer* of London said, "India's stock of plutonium is adequate to make 40 medium-sized bombs". I do not know whether the estimate was made by the British intelligence service. How can they calculate this? However, this is what they have written. All of us know the reactions of Pakistan. Mr. Aziz Ahmed Khan said—he says this has been confirmed by Canada—India has enough plutonium to make 17 bombs. This is rather less than the British estimate. In any case, many countries seem to be sceptical because the technology of this underground explosion is basically the same as that required for making bombs.

I am only worried about the end thing. Despite the repeated assurances given by the Government of India since 18 May, which we consider to be welcome assurances, they are being assailed from either side. On the one side they are being assailed by some imperialistic powers who are angry and annoyed, why a so-called developing country should at all attain this status. On the other side they are being assailed by some critics in our country. They say: why are you apologetic, why are you so defensive all the time, why do you want to say all the time that we are going to use it only for peaceful purposes? Shri Samar Guha said it just now and I am sure my hon. friend, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, will make out a much stronger case, saying that we should immediately use this capability to develop weapons and a nuclear arsenal.

*** *** ***

All I wish to say is that the Government of India, while considering the technological aspect of this achievement, should not lose sight of the political aspect. We have been told that we have had the capability for a long time, we could have set off this blast much earlier, if we wanted to. Well, if we could have set it off much earlier, we could have set it off much later also. My question is about the timing of it. There must be some reason behind the timing of this, this particular timing of 18th May. I am not clear about it.

I would simply like to know whether the Government of India has taken all these considerations into account, that there are people in this world who do not view us in a kindly light, who are our enemies, who make no pretence of their hostility to us, no secret of it, people who are at all times trying to point out that India has got aggressive designs, expansionist designs, and who would seize upon an occasion like this to project their own ideas in the world and to try to spoil, if I may say so, the atmosphere which we have been trying to create since the Simla Agreement of 1972, of trying to bring about step by step, some kind of normalisation of relations between ourselves, Bangladesh and Pakistan and some sort of *detente*, if I may use that expression, on this sub-continent so that we do not have to live in this atmosphere of repeated outbreaks of war every four or five years. We have advanced quite a bit on that path and we were advancing despite all difficulties and obstacles. I hope we would also take into consideration this fact that people like Prime Minister Bhutto, or some other people in Pakistan who may be perhaps more anti-Indian than Bhutto himself, and their patrons—they have foreign patrons and they are members of foreign military pacts—they would seize upon an opportunity like this to say that India is now preparing to have some sort of aggressive or militaristic designs in this region and, therefore, on that plea Pakistan and their allies should be given some protection in the form of a nuclear umbrella. Already I find from the writings in the Pakistani Press that they have approached China and the United States to protect them against the new threat from India. They are utilising this for this kind of motivated propaganda, the result being that some nuclear bases may appear on our sub-continent, just near our borders, across our borders, where they did not exist at present.

Our Prime Minister has done very well, as also other Ministers, and Sardar Swaran Singh has repeatedly made detailed statements, assuring everybody, particularly the Government and the people of Pakistan, that we do not have any aggressive designs whatsoever and that we are not going to use this technology for anything except purposes of peaceful development. Nevertheless, I would just remind the Government that a nuclear arms race of any kind, even in the sphere of what Professor Samar Guha called tactical nuclear weapons, would in my view be a disaster for us. Already we are in a terrible condition, economically and financially, and I do not wish to go into that. We do not know where the resources are going to come from for

this. Our people are starving and it would mean diversion of resources from much pressing needs of our people. Nobody can suggest that if we adopt some nuclear tactical weapons, we can reduce the expenditure on our conventional arms and armies. That can never be done. It will mean, something over and above, in addition to our conventional defence set up. The recent experience shows that in local wars—I am not talking of world wars; I hope that world wars will not break out again; that might lead to nuclear holocaust and devastation on a global scale—in local wars, of which we have had experience in the last few years twice or thrice, we have to depend on conventional weapons. A small country like Vietnam all these years was locked in a mortal combat with one of the biggest nuclear powers in the world. We have seen the wars in the Middle East, between Israel and Arab countries; we have seen the hostilities now in Cyprus. It is not possible to wage modern wars even on a local scale with the use of nuclear weapons. It is not so easy today. The conventional arms are used. We have also relied on conventional arms for the defence in the past. Therefore, I would say that self-reliant defence system, the well-trained army, is all we can afford. Even that is more than what we can afford at the moment. We are spending Rs. 2000 crore a year on it. We cannot visualise this huge amount being increased by the advocacy of going in for nuclear armaments. Ultimately of course, it is only nuclear disarmament on a world scale, a ban on all nuclear weapons, which can guarantee the survival of this world and peace and security for everybody.

Some method can be found by which we can have a mutual security or collective security arrangement with our friends and neighbours in this region. I share the views of the hon. Members that we have now acquired this capability and we can speak from the position of relative strength in favour of peace, not in favour of war. We can use our new position and our voice will be respected much more in the councils of the world to advocate much more strongly that the world should go in for nuclear disarmament and a total ban on production and stockpiling and use of all nuclear arms by all nuclear powers. That should be the goal for which we should utilise our new strength and capability.

All I say in conclusion is that no matter what pressure is put on the Government, from outside or from within our own country, from certain quarters, to pressurise and push the Government on to the path of nuclear armaments, I would appeal to the Government to stand firm, to adhere to its principled position, which it has taken up in the past and not to allow itself to be pressurised or stampeded in any way. If we go on that path, it will mean economic ruin for this country altogether. It will also mean, I fear, a loss of the traditional reputation and image which our country has built up in the world and which has stood us in good stead all these years.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have listened very attentively to the statement made by the hon. Prime Minister this morning, for which I think the whole country was waiting. I think there is a practically unanimous feeling in the country that the major share or credit for the scientific achievement which has been recorded must go to our scientists and our engineers and cannot go to any political party. It cannot go to the ruling party which may like to take credit in order to extract some political mileage out of it.

These scientists and engineers actually demonstrated their capability in the nuclear field 24 years ago, not today. These things do not happen overnight. These require long period of preparation, research and so on. Twenty-four years ago when the first blast took place in Pokhran, they had already demonstrated their capability and of course they have been up-dating their technology and now they have demonstrated in 1998 that they are capable of making an independent contribution which is of the highest importance.

Incidentally, I would like to at this stage, congratulate Dr. Abdul Kalam for getting the *Bharat Ratna* which he richly deserves.

As far as the sovereign right of a country is concerned, an independent sovereign country has got the right. Nobody can question our right to go ahead with this type of testing if we want to do so. It is for us to explain why we are doing it, for what purpose we are doing it and so on. But if some countries, somewhere here and there talk in a way, as if they are questioning our right, they have no business to do that because every country, especially an independent sovereign country certainly has got its own right.

The question that I would like to raise is why this testing has been done now at this stage. In his letter to President Clinton which I think was not meant to be publicised, but it was leaked to the Press, or the Press got hold of it somehow, the Prime Minister has attributed this sudden testing to what he calls the deteriorating security environment of India. And he makes it quite clear that he is referring to a threat from China and this appears to be in tune with the anti-Chinese fulminations of the Defence Minister, made a few days earlier.

---

* Participating in the discussion under Rule 193 regarding the Nuclear Tests in Pokhran; *L.S. Deb.*, 27 May 1998.

In fact, the Defence Minister's rather aggressive remarks. I think, were meant obviously to prepare the ground for official explanation which has now been made available in the Prime Minister's letter to the U.S. President.

I am not raising the question, at the moment, whether this type of letter should be considered as somewhat unusual or not. I do not know whether this kind of a letter, dealing with a subject, addressed to the President of another country is proper or not in the field of international relations. Anyway, the letter has gone.

Sir, the question I am asking to which I would like to have a reply is this. What was the sudden provocation, if any, at this stage? If it was from China's side, we would like to know what that provocation was. We have had our disputes with China for a long time and most of those disputes, perhaps, are not resolved yet. We all remember what happened in 1962. We remember that large tracts of Indian territory are in the possession of China and that the questions relating to the border have also not been resolved, but this is nothing new. This has been going on for so many years. I find that there is a statement which is connected with Starred Question number 20 to be answered today, the 27th of May in the Lok Sabha. This is a statement regarding neighbouring countries. After all, this is an official statement. May I just read it? It says:

> "In recent years, India-China relations have developed steadily. The momentum of high level dialogue has been maintained and there is a growing functional cooperation between the two countries in diverse fields. The two countries have agreed to work towards a constructive and cooperative relationship oriented towards the 21st century. The bilateral trade reached US dollars 1.8 billion in 1997.
>
> Various issues of mutual interest including the boundary question, are being discussed in the framework of the India-China Joint Working Group and India-China Expert Group."

Now, does this statement which has been submitted to the House on behalf of the Government, give an impression that suddenly today there is a deterioration in India-China relations or the bilateral mechanism which has been set up, the cooperation which is taking place, and the constructive dialogue which is taking place as mentioned here has suddenly been interrupted or sabotaged by China? I do not find it here in this statement.

Also, Sir, in this statement which was made by the hon. Prime Minister, there is a paragraph number thirteen. I do not want to read it because it will take too much time. It says that our policy towards our neighbours and other countries also have not changed. This is here. This is what was read out:

> "India remains fully committed to the promotion of peace with stability, and resolution of all outstanding issues through bilateral dialogue and negotiations....

...The Government will continue to remain engaged in substantive dialogue with our neighbours to improve relations and to expand the scope of our interactions in a mutually advantageous manner."

I do not know whether all these statements are meant to indicate that China alone is an exception to this line and attitude that we, officially, here have said that we are taking and we want to continue to take. Nowhere it is mentioned that the exception of all this is China and China has suddenly started behaving in some different way which has created a provocation at this moment which has suddenly led us to take this decision of testing of nuclear weapons.

Therefore, I have this question to ask and I would like some clarification. In fact, I think, the Prime Minister should have even before the testing, perhaps may be they did not want to do that—taken at least the major political parties into confidence. They could have taken their own allies into confidence. But anyway, that was not done. Now, when we are debating this matter in the House, certainly we have every right to ask this question as to what was the sudden provocation which had led to this testing.

We all agree that there must be absolutely no relaxation of defence preparedness. There should be no relaxation of security measures, especially in our country where we have got a very troublesome environment along the borders of our country. But what I am asking is this. Is it essential for our security that we should go in for production and deployment of nuclear weapons? Many countries, of course, as we know, have manufactured and stockpiled nuclear weapons in the name of security. But these are such weapons that they cannot be used. America which has the biggest stockpile of nuclear weapons was not able to use them against a poor and backward country like Vietnam. It fought Vietnam for 12 years in order to crush the liberation movement of the Vietnamese people. But it could not and dare not, in the face of the conscience of the world, use those weapons.

*** *** ***

So, what is more essential for our security in the long run is this. Firstly, what has been stated here in the Prime Minister's statement which I have already read out is "building of good relations with our neighbouring countries and the creation of bilateral and regional mechanisms for that purpose." These are weapons of mass destruction. He had quoted in the morning—approvingly, I suppose—from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who had said on 2 April, 1954 in this House that "nuclear, chemical and biological energy and power should not be used to forge weapons of mass destruction".

We are now saying that we have now become a weaponised State, a nuclear weaponised State. So, I would like to know whether the weapons

which we are engaged in researching and trying to manufacture can be used as weapons of mass destruction or not. Are they weapons of mass destruction or not? Of course, the Government must declare and has declared—I am glad to see—that we have no aggressive intentions towards anybody. These weapons will never be used for aggressive purposes and so on. But intrinsically, are they weapons of mass destruction or not? If they are, why are we giving up the line that we have pursued consistently for so many years and go in for this? Of course, some provocation may have been there, I do not know, from the side of Pakistan, because they suddenly developed this 'Ghauri' missile and said that it has a long range of so many thousands of kilometres. This 'Ghauri' missile may be interpreted as a threat to us.

So, if the Pakistan Government chooses to go in also for development of nuclear weapons, what would happen? The Prime Minister of Pakistan has reported to have said that the Indian experiments of underground testing are considered by Pakistan to be a threat to them and, therefore, he has said that, within a few days, they would also test their own nuclear weapons. This means that a sort of competition and a race in nuclear arms is being triggered off and the history has shown that this is a very risky thing and is a very reckless thing. Even with the best of intentions one cannot say where a mishap may occur.

Sir, I think that it is not enough for the Prime Minister to have told President Clinton, I do not know whether the idea was to please the American rulers—that we consider the main threat to be from China. The Defence Minister, of course, is one of the outstanding champions of what is known as the Socialist International based in Amsterdam. He is one of the top leaders of that Socialist International which has always been a China baiter. It is nothing new. But I do not expect the policy of the Amsterdam International to be taken over as the official policy of the Government of India. It cannot be done.

Now, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the conscience of the world has renounced the use of nuclear weapons as wepaons of mass destruction which cannot serve a military purpose. For example, the United Kingdom is one of the nuclear powers. But everybody knows that it has become a second class power. In the world, it is considered to be a second class power though it holds nuclear weapons. The mighty USSR got itself bankrupted by tyring to chase nuclear parity with the United States and NATO. In that mad race for parity in nuclear arms, the first biggest historic casualty has been the USSR. On the other hand, Japan and Germany are considered to be the powerful States. But they do not have nuclear weapons. They do not have nuclear weapons but they are not certainly weak countries. So, let us think about these things.

As I said, if Pakistan chooses to go in for what you may call a sort of tit-for-tat policy, then there is a grave risk of a nuclear arms race being triggered off in this part of the continent.

The Prime Minister has said nothing about the economic cost of producing nuclear weapons. He has not specifically said anything about the impact of sanctions or the threat of sanctions. But I think our country, our Government, along with the development of nuclear testing should give a clear-cut commitment that we are not going to go in for the first use or the first strike of such weapons. We should say that the first strike will never be by India and invite all other countries to join in this commitment and ask them to respond to it and if they do not respond, they will automatically be exposed.

Sir, the United States sanctions may not cause irrecoverable damage to our economy because they are supposed to be coming mainly from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and so on. In fact, I find that there is perhaps a very farsighted calculation even by our Government behind all this, that these sanctions, if they come, will push forward the economic liberalisation policy which we have been following since 1991. If the multinational corporations are assiduously wooed, then the private capital can replace the aid from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. It may even increase.

I find Sir, that a well-informed paper like *The Economist* of London has pointed out that "soon after the nuclear blasting, the Government of India has awarded 18 oil exploration contracts–11 of them to American companies, whose projects had been in limbo for two years. It has cleared 34 exploration licences for onshore minerals in four States. Three foreign investments in power projects, which had been languishing for want of a Government guarantee, were suddenly approved and according to newspaper reports the Government is to allow foreign investors to own 100 per cent of the equity of housing companies against 40 per cent earlier and to raise hard currency loans for the first time."

So, these American companies who are very conscious of the huge market which exists here in India, even if the official agencies impose sanctions, and nothing that we have done will dissuade or should dissuade the American private investors and multinational corporations from taking advantage of these various projects. So, on the balance, we may not lose, we may even gain.

The Prime Minister mentioned this morning that they have declared a voluntary moratorium. I would like to know a little more about this. What exactly do you mean by this 'voluntary moratorium'? We have already said that we would consider signing some aspects of this CTBT. Nobody has

clarified, what is meant by 'some aspects of the CTBT'. One of the main conditionalities of the CTBT is that nuclear testing should be stopped. This applies to all signatories to the CTBT. If we have already unilaterally declared that we are going to go in for a voluntary moratorium, now does it mean that one of the conditionalities of the CTBT is, in fact, being accepted by us by the back-door and that is the signal that we want to send out? Whatever it is, let the country and the Parliament be taken into confidence. There should be transparency now about these things and we should be told what exactly the Government is preparing to do.

So, Sir, I must say more or less in conclusion that the whole exercise appears to me to have been an exercise in futility. This type of weapon does not strengthen our security at all. Secondly, we have declared a moratorium. Thirdly we do not know what is going to be the cost of it. We have a pretty honourable standing in the international comity of nations. I do not know to what extent this thing will reduce our friends abroad and, perhaps, isolate us to some extent.

Fourthly, it is a very ironical matter, Sir, that in the Capital City of Delhi, thousands and lakhs of people are going without power and water, and we are going to go in for producing nuclear power now and saying that this is a great achievement, that you have done something which required to be hailed with great enthusiasm. They cannot supply ordinary water and power to the inhabitants of the Capital City of this country. You just see what is going on. Yesterday, people from so many colonies and areas of Delhi have come out of their homes and staged angry demonstrations and they have even gheraoed the houses of some Councillors and other popular representatives of the ruling party because they have been given all sorts of assurances and those assurances have come to nothing. So, where does all this lead to? How does it add up.

Therefore, I think that this is something which after a few days you will find, there is little room left for enthusiasm. What is the enthusiasm about it except that our scientists have proved that they are second to none in the world? That is something of which I am proud. But beyond that, where do we go from here?

So, these are some of the questions which I would like the Prime Minister to deal with when he replies and apart from that, I do not have anything much to say because we are not condemning the fact that nuclear testing has been done. That by itself, technical or scientific, is a good achievement. But, on the other hand, there is nothing to get euphoric about it.

Therefore, we should continue to pursue the other methods and other efforts that we have been making over the years in order to improve our relationship.

It is quite heartening to find that in the recent Conference of the non-aligned countries which took place in Cartagena, except for three or four countries, the overwhelming majority did not condemn India. They did not at all consider that India has done something which is against the spirit that has actuated the non-aligned countries all these years. That is a good thing. Therefore, I think we should have second thoughts on this whole matter and the Prime Minister should think over it.

Lastly, I would say the Prime Minister must take steps to see that his Ministers, if I may say so, do not speak in different voices. How can people in this country have confidence in a Government whose Ministers go on speaking in different voices on the same thing? I broadly agree with what the Prime Minister says, the kind of line that he is trying to propagate and advance, because it is consistent with what we have been doing all these years. But we have got Ministers here who are making such bellicose and aggressive statements which are not calculated to strengthen peace or security, but which may provoke other people. We have got neighbours who are not very friendly with us and this subject is something on which even some Ministers, I think, do not have any direct dealings at all. They also come out with statements. I do not know who has authorised them to do it. I think on such a delicate and sensitive matter, official statements in the name of the Government, should be confined to the Prime Minister, who in the past, as we know, was considered to be quite a renowned foreign policy expert even when he was not in the Government. When he was the Leader of the Opposition, the Government at that time had sent him many times on foreign policy missions abroad because he was trusted as a competent and authoritative spokesman of the line which India had been following and he conducted himself with great distinction, I should say, even in such meetings where we have confrontations directly with the Pakistanis in Geneva and so on.

So, I stand more or less by what he has been saying. I find it very awkward and very jarring that some other Ministers every now and then—I do not know whether they do it for publicity purposes or for what other purposes—always chip in with something or the other which strikes a jarring note and which is not in keeping with what the Prime Minister has said. I do not know why the Prime Minister allows these things to go on.... It does some damage to the country's image and reputation abroad. This should be stopped as soon as possible.

*** *** ***

Part IV

ADDRESSES AT THE CONFERMENT OF THE BHARAT RATNA PANDIT GOVIND BALLABH PANT OUTSTANDING PARLIAMENTARIAN AWARD ON SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA

On 23 September, 1992, at the inaugural function of the All-India Conference of Presiding Officers, Leaders of Parties and Whips, held in the Central Hall of Parliament House, the first Bharat Ratna Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant Outstanding Parliamentarian Award was conferred on Shri Indrajit Gupta, M.P. The Award, instituted by the Govind Ballabh Pant Memorial Society, was presented to Shri Indrajit Gupta by the then Prime Minister of India Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao. The function was attended by the Vice-President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri K.R. Narayanan; the then Speaker, Lok Sabha, Shri Shivraj V. Patil; and the Secretary of the Govind Ballabh Pant Memorial Society, Shri K.C. Pant.

Below are the excerpts from the Addresses delivered by the dignitaries on the occasion:

FROM THE WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE SPEAKER, LOK SABHA SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL

We are happy to announce that Shri Govind Ballabh Pant Memorial Society which was started in the days of our first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, has decided to give an award to an Outstanding Parliamentarian every year.

The Award is given to a parliamentarian who is proficient in language and delivery of speeches, who always tries to deal with real, important, national and international issues, who backs his arguments with logic and reasons, who observes the rules of the game very meticulously and who is consistent in his political philosophy and approach to significant issues.

The Award is given to a parliamentarian chosen by a Jury which consists of leaders in the Judiciary, media, politics and other walks of life.

For this year, the Jury has recognised Shri Indrajit Gupta as the awardee. Shri Indrajit Gupta was persuaded to receive the Award and we are thankful to him for agreeing to receive it. The Award is given in memory of a great

parliamentarian and leader of India. That, in itself, is a great gift to the awardee. The awardees would also raise its value and worth, by honouring to receive it.

We thank the Society for giving this Award and giving it in this Conference.

Respected Pradhan Mantriji would give away the Award.

More about the Award would be explained to us by Shri K.C. Pantji.

FROM THE ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY, GOVIND BALLABH PANT MEMORIAL SOCIETY, SHRI K.C. PANT

The Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Memorial Society came into existence thirty years ago in 1963. The moving spirit behind the formation of the Society was Shri T.T. Krishnamachari. Since then it has had the good fortune of being guided by successive national leaders in its efforts to help worthy causes and institutions.

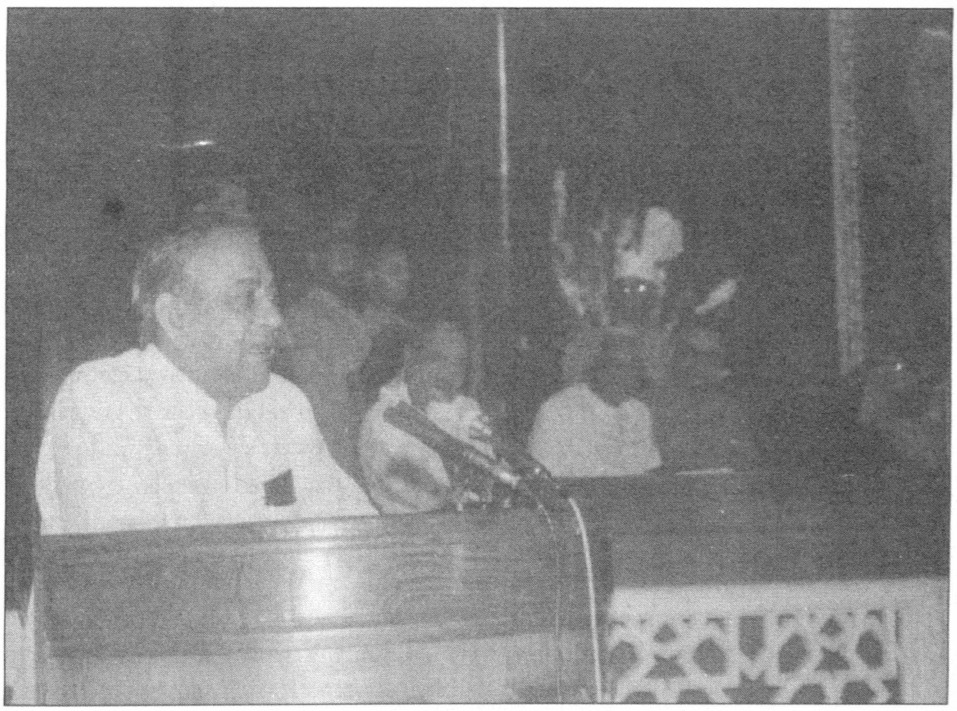
The Society has brought out biography of Pandit Pant in English and Hindi and taken up other programmes to perpetuate his memory. The Society is also instrumental in setting up a National Committee to celebrate Pantji's centenary. I thank Shri Narasimha Rao, who was a member of the Committee, for emphasising the need to compile Pandit Pant's papers and initiating the project.

Today's award function has a special significance and meaning. It is the culmination of the Society's surge for a fitting memorial to Pandit Pant's long and rewarding association with legislative bodies. From the early twenties to his passing away in 1961, except for the period spent in British jail, he was a member of the Legislature either in U.P. or at the Centre. At different times he played a prominent role in the Opposition and the Government in the State and the Centre. He was Leader of the Opposition in the UP Legislative Council in the pre-Independence period and Leader of the UP Assembly and Chief Minister after Independence. He was also Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Central Assembly in 1935 and Leader of the Rajya Sabha and Home Minister from the end of 1954 to 1961.

He was a firm believer in maintaining decorum and order in the House, the subject of today's Conference. For him Parliament was the highest forum for the expression of the sovereignty and will of the people, a guarantor of their freedom and dignity.

In 1959, Pt. Pant had said, "We are much bound by the Constitution as any State or any local body. If we make any departure from it we would be

Receiving the first Bharat Ratna Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Outstanding Parliamentarian Award from the then Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao in the Central Hall of Parliament on 23 September 1992



Addressing the distinguished gathering in the Central Hall of Parliament House after receiving the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award on 23 September 1992

doing something which would be extremely, I would say, not only undesirable, but also dangerous. Because we have not only to work for the present but we happen to be in a position also to influence the future course of events."

It is against this background that the Society decided to confer an Award of Rs. 1 lakh every year to an outstanding parliamentarian. While the Society would have liked to institute an Award for the Assembly members as well, it has not been possible this year. The difficult and delicate task of selecting the awardee from amongst the galaxy of luminaries, who are or have been till recently members of Parliament, was performed by a Jury headed by the Speaker. The Jury unanimously decided to confer the Award on Shri Indrajit Gupta.

May I extend my warmest congratulations to Shri Indrajit Gupta and invite him to the dais to receive the Award from the Prime Minister?

The Secretary of the Govind Ballabh Pant Memorial Society, Shri G.L. Bansal then read out the Citation on behalf of the Society.

BHARAT RATNA PANDIT GOVIND BALLABH PANT OUTSTANDING PARLIAMENTARIAN AWARD, 1992

CITATION

Shri Indrajit Gupta has the distinction of being elected to the Lok Sabha for an uninterrupted period of almost thirty years since 1960.

Cogent in argument and skilled in parliamentary practice, he has presented the point of view of the Communist Party of India, which he represents, with lucidity and without rancour in an impressive number of important debates. He has made his mark in Parliament as much by his mastery of facts as by the standards he has maintained. He attends the House with almost unfailing regularity. He commands the respect of all sections of the House. He does not allow his voice of reason to be drowned in the noise of inarticulate protest. His parliamentary behaviour is exemplary, he opposes when he must without any personal ill-will, and without forsaking his innate dignity or sense of decorum.

Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant, even while he was devastating in debate, was a model of courtesy and a meticulous upholder of the values and traditions which impart strength to the institution of Parliament. It is a matter of pleasure for the Society to bestow this Award, which has been instituted in Pantji's name, on Shri Indrajit Gupta.

FROM THE ADDRESS BY SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA

I am much gratified that such an honour has been done to me by a Jury of eminent persons to commemorate the name of Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant. I remember him in the House and how impressed everybody was by his great grasp of parliamentary procedure and his eloquence, his argumentation, his great relevance to what was going on and his way of dealing with his opponents.

For fifty years or more, I have been a whole-time worker of the Communist Party. In our country, at least from the very dawn of Independence, the Communists have believed in parliamentary democracy as the most suited institution for a country like ours. And we have tried out best to work within the framework of this system and to contribute something to it. I am particularly honoured that this function is taking place here in the presence of so many important people from all over the country. And that adds to my gratification.

FROM THE ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA, SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO

I am very happy that we have a veteran parliamentarian being awarded the Govind Ballabh Pant Award today. We have had a galaxy of great, very great parliamentarians in this country. Pandit Pant was one of those very great parliamentarians. It was a pleasure, it was education to hear him. It is education today to read from the proceedings of the House, the way he handled different subjects in Parliament and the way he made life pretty miserable for the Government benches when he was in the Opposition. There is a lot one could learn from Pantji.

Of course, we have had the privilege of working with Shri Indrajit Gupta for years and years. There is absolutely no doubt that he is a shining example of what a parliamentarian should be. I had not thought that he is capable of such a very deep humility that even the Speaker has to persuade him to accept the Award. Was it humility or was he doubting the judgement of the Jury? Anyhow, I want to congratulate him. He is a very dear friend, a very effective parliamentarian and a perfect gentleman, perhaps as perfect as one could imagine. Of course, he has to defend himself from being a Communist or saying that he continues to be a Communist. He cannot help it. I cannot help being a Congressman. It is too late for us to change. So, we will continue in our camps but we will do what we can do to enhance the prestige of Parliament, to make parliamentary democracy more effective and that is the essence of the whole thing. We belong to our parties but there is something which is above party and we are quick to perceive the importance of that portion which is above party and which pertains to the whole country.

I very heartily congratulate him and congratulate the Committee for having chosen him for this Award.

FROM THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDIA AND CHAIRMAN, RAJYA SABHA, SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN

May I first of all congratulate Shri Indrajit Gupta for the Award of the Govind Ballabh Pant Memorial Society to him. I recollect that at one of the meetings which Gandhiji was addressing, a young Communist kept on interrupting him and at last Gandhiji told him, Communism does not exclude courtesy and that ended the matter. Shri Indrajit Gupta is courtesy incarnate. I think, if we follow his conduct in Parliament and that of the great leader in whose name, the Award was instituted, we would have very little problem in tackling the question of disorder and disturbances in Parliament.

TRIBUTES PAID IN LOK SABHA*

SHRI G.M.C. BALAYOGI, HON. SPEAKER, LOK SABHA: Hon. members, I have to inform the House with profound sorrow of the passing away of one of our esteemed colleagues, Shri Indrajit Gupta.

Shri Indrajit Gupta was sitting member of Lok Sabha representing Midnapore Parliamentary Constituency of West Bengal. He was earlier a member of Second and Third Lok Sabha from 1960 to 1967 representing Calcutta South-West; Fourth and Fifth Lok Sabha from 1967 to 1977 representing Alipore; Seventh and Eighth Lok Sabha from 1980 to 1989 representing Basirhat; and Ninth to Twelfth Lok Sabha from 1989 to 1999 representing Midnapore parliamentary constituencies of West Bengal. Being the senior-most member, Shri Gupta was popularly known as 'Father of the House'.

An able administrator, Shri Gupta served as Minister of Home Affairs in the Union Council of Ministers from 1996 to 1998.

A well-known parliamentarian, Shri Gupta was Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence during 1995-1996 and was presently Chairman of Committee on Subordinate Legislation since 1999. He was also a member of various Parliamentary Committees like Rules Committee during 1990-1991; General Purposes Committee during 1985-1989 and from 1998 onwards; Committee on Defence from 1998 to 2000; Committee on Petitions during 1986-1987; Business Advisory Committee 1986-1987 and 1989; Library Committee during 1990-1991 and Committee to Review Lok Sabha Secretariat Rules, 1955 during 1990.

A popular trade unionist, Shri Gupta represented various trade unions and lost no time in highlighting the problems faced by the workers.

A man of letters, he had to his credit two publications, namely, 'Capital and Labour in the Jute Industry' and 'Self Reliance in National Defence'.

---

* *L.S. Deb.*, 20 February 2001.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE, HON. PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have lost one more colleague of ours who was known as a stalwart in the Parliament. I saw him here as an M.P. from the year 1960. He was committed to the ideology of his party, but he presented his thoughts and arguments in a very polite language. Though there was difference of opinion with him, yet he had an attractive personality. There was firmness in his personality. He was committed to the ideology and his life was like an open book. He always expressed his views as a seasoned Parliamentarian and contributed greatly for evolving consensus in the time of crisis. He was associated with trade union movement which catapulted him onto the centrestage of politics. He made concerted efforts to safeguard workers' interests. He used to propagate the interests of the working class in and outside the country. He had always a deep sense of concern for the problems of the country and the lot of the downtrodden and the exploited. He had a towering personality. Though he could not keep himself aloof from the pandemonium in Parliament yet he always maintained dignity. We all had cordial relations with him. On his death the Lok Sabha has suffered a great loss. I have already said, he was a great stalwart who is no more amidst us. I pay tributes to him on behalf of the Government and my party and on my own behalf and I would like that our condolences should be conveyed to the bereaved family.

SHRIMATI SONIA GANDHI, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the passing away of Shri Indrajit Gupta is not only a loss for Parliament, not only a loss for West Bengal but it is a national loss. He was the senior-most member of the Lok Sabha. Every intervention by him was heard in silence and with great respect. His analytical mind was able to delineate the most complex political, social and economic issues in a manner that always convinced his audience. His understanding of the problems facing our country was quite remarkable.

He did not ever raise his voice or use harsh words, and his masterly debating brilliance will be remembered for a long time by all of us and by all his colleagues. He was truly a great patriotic Indian.

My family's close links with him go back to the 1930s when he used to study in England with my mother-in-law.

My husband and I continued our association with him. We looked up to Shri Indrajit Gupta as an elderly statesman whose vision of India was all inclusive, never exclusive. He left no one out. His example will continue to inspire future generations.

The then Vice-President of India, and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri Krishan Kant, paying homage to Shri Indrajit Gupta at the Bhupesh Gupta Bhawan, Kolkata, 22 February 2001

The then Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri G.M.C. Balayogi, paying homage to Shri Indrajit Gupta, Kolkata, 22 February 2001

The then Union Minister for Home Affairs, Shri L.K. Advani, paying homage to Shri Indrajit Gupta, Kolkata, 22 February 2001

The then Union Minister for Defence, Shri George Fernandes, paying tribute to Shri Indrajit Gupta, Kolkata, 22 February 2001

On behalf of the Congress Party, I would like to express my condolences, my deepfelt feelings of empathy and support to the members of the bereaved family, to the members of his political party and to all his followers and admirers.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE, MEMBER: Sir, it is one of the saddest days in the history of this House that we shall no longer find Comrade Indrajit Gupta adorning the front benches of this House and I stand here to mourn the loss of one of the most outstanding politicians and parliamentarians of all times.

We will no longer hear his reasoned arguments. He was a debater par excellence, always fully conscious of the norms, rules and procedures of the House. He could hold the whole House to total silence because of his arguments. He always touched the hearts of the people. He earned their respect by his dedicated service to the people.

An ardent socialist, he was dedicated towards the uplift of the people, removing disparities amongst the people and one of the greatest leaders of the Trade Union Movement, always fought for the vulnerable sections of the community.

He came to Parliament as one of the well-established leaders of the masses and by sheer service and the merit of his contribution, he earned the respect of all the sections of the House.

He could have lived an easier and comfortable life, but he chose the path of struggle. After his return from England, he plunged himself into the trade union movement and he was looked as one of the Messiahs of the toiling masses of this country.

I have had the great fortune to serve here like his younger brother. He showed us light, he showed us direction and whenever there was any occasion when we could not decide what to do, he was there to guide us.

I do not have sufficient words to express my deepest anguish today. He was a reluctant Minister. I know that he did not really enjoy that.

But with sincerity, he dedicated himself to the discharge of his functions and we could see, as a Home Minister, his compassion for the people. He always held the scale even. I am sure, everybody who had seen him as a Minister, will agree that he not only believed in but also practised total transparency in the discharge of his duties as a very important Minister in the Central Cabinet. I do not know when we can find replacements, if at all, for stalwarts like Shri Indrajit Gupta. We are really poorer today. The struggling

people of this country who are still suffering from various injustices, imperfections and denials, have lost one of their outstanding leaders and a true friend in his passing away. There are many problems still besetting us. Unfortunately, we will not have his counsel, his leadership in the years to come. My party and all of us sincerely mourn his passing away and his loss, and I request you to kindly convey our feelings of deep distress and anguish to his family.

Let us be inspired by the example that he has left behind. Let us not do anything which will, in any way, affect the greatness of this institution to which he was also dedicated. He believed in the supremacy of Parliament. He believed that Parliament can solve any of our problems and, for good reason, he was selected as the Outstanding Parliamentarian. He was the first choice and it came to him automatically.

Let us all pledge ourselves to follow his example.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU, MEMBER: Sir, today is a sad day for all of us. Today, this House has been hit by a more powerful quake in the form of the death of Shri Indrajit Babu. For me, it is very difficult to think of this august House without Shri Indrajit Gupta. He has been a member of Parliament from the beginning, except for two years. He was elected to this august House eleven times. We, the members, have to learn how to maintain the dignity and the decorum of the House. For the last five years, I have been a member of this august House. His behaviour, his attitude in the House have always been graceful. If there was any crisis in this House, he gave beautiful advice to the Chair and to all the leaders of the political parties on how to resolve that. I have had the privilege of being a Minister with Shri Indrajit Babu during the Eleventh Lok Sabha. His commitment, his wisdom, his advice in the Cabinet were very useful for this country. We have learnt a lot from Shri Indrajit Gupta. My party has always loved Indrajit Babu. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Chandrababu Naidu always praised Shri Indrajit Gupta for his Gandhian philosophy, for his simplicity and for his way of life. So, I appeal to you that in the memory of Shri Indrajit Gupta, you should take steps to install his statue in the Parliament House.

He had been elected 11 times as member of Parliament. He was the seniormost member in the Parliament. He acted as the *pro-tem* Speaker, conducted the House and administered oath to all the members of Parliament. On behalf of my Telugu Desam Party, on behalf of my parliamentary party and on my own behalf, I convey my sincere and heartful condolences to the members of the bereaved family of Shri Indrajit Gupta.

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the entire House is sad. A distinguished Hon'ble member Shri Gupta was not only a member of this House but the leader of entire country. He devoted his entire life for the sake of the poor and the workers. I also had the opportunity to listen to him not only in this House but also in the public meetings. He was such an intelligent person, a scholar, that he used to make the most complicated subjects appear very simple to the laymen.

He was not only well versed in parliamentary procedure but was also deft in putting forth his views logically, with all seriousness to the imagination of the common people. I was much younger to him, and often had difference of views on many occasions but he never got disturbed and remained cool. In the House there were a number of instances when he criticised me and tried to convince me too. There are a few people in public life who guide the people to tread on the right path. He was one of those leaders and we have lost him. Last time he sat here and when I enquired about his health he was not very optimistic. After that probably he did not come to the House again.

He stuck to what he thought proper, even in administrative matters and translated his ideas into action. I have worked with him in the Government. On many occasions, I realised that he stuck to his opinion in a logical way. He always honoured the consensus opinion. He had deep faith in democracy. We are very sad to be devoid of his knowledge, arguments and speeches. Gradually, the generation which was committed to ethical and political values in life is fading away.

This is a matter of concern that that generation is bowing out of the scene. It will be a real tribute to him if we follow the path and ideals dear to him.

Please convey condolences on behalf of my party to the members of the bereaved family, his well wishers and his party.

SHRI T.R. BAALU, MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Indrajit Gupta, a tall and towering personality of this august House, is no more with us. Sir, you used to call him as Father of this House. Not only me, but every parliamentarian learnt lessons from him about how to conduct oneself in this august House.

Sir, there is a *kural* by Saint Thiruvalluvar:

"Nerunal ulanoruvan inrillai yenum
perumai udaithu ivvulagu."

It means "the man who has lived yesterday is no more today. The man who is living today may not be tomorrow." That is the pride of this earth.

Sir, there is one more saying:

"Thakkar thagavilar enbadhu avaravar
etchathhal kaanappadum."

It means 'to identify the personality of a man, see his performance'. Shri Indrajit Gupta had performed and had fought against the tyranny of totalitarianism for the sake of proletariat, fought against the tyranny many times to safeguard the interest of the democracy. Sir, the nation has lost an illustrious son. My leader, Dr. Kalaignar Karunanidhi has lost his own bosom friend.

Sir, I conclude with the remark that on behalf of the DMK Party, I would like to convey our condolence message to the bereaved family.

[Translation]

SHRI RASHID ALVI, MEMBER: Sir, death is the ultimate truth. Shri Indrajit Gupta is no more. He was a great person and in the last few days, whenever I met him I used to dread the day when he would be no more and that day has now come. He had become synonymous with Lok Sabha and one could not think of a Lok Sabha without him.

He was an unassuming person. Even while being the Home Minister of India, he used to live in a small room of Western Court. He never nurtured the ego of having been the Home Minister of this country. His life should be a lesson for all of us. Today he is no more amidst us, but he showed the right path for the country and all of us.

One can differ with his ideological stance but we cannot differ on his nationalist approach and convictions. Lord Krishna has said in 'Gita':

[English]

"Death is nothing but a transfer of soul from one place to another place."

[Translation]

In my religion, the Prophet has said that: "Death is nothing but the end of soul which leaves one place for another." But still one is shocked when one's own veteran colleague departs.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when I informed my party Chief, sister Mayawati of his demise in the morning and expressed my sorrow, she said that everyone in

the world has to die one day but one can become immortal through one's deeds. I believe his name will always be remembered and his deeds will be appreciated. I conclude with this couplet:

"Yun to aaye hain sabhi dunia mein marne ke liye
Maut uski hai kare jiska Zamana Afsos."

I request you, on behalf of Bahujan Samaj Party and on behalf of our leader sister Mawayati ji and on my own behalf to convey our deep condolences to the bereaved family.

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House is full of grief and sorrow at the sudden demise of the 'Father of the House' Shri Indrajit Gupta.

Sir, we heard a lot about him. When I entered this House, he was the *pro tem* Speaker administering the Oath of Office to members. During my student days, through newspapers, I heard his arguments in this House because he was a senior member of Parliament. He has displayed courage and conviction throughout his life. He was a very simple man. He has followed certain principles and lived up to his principles till his death. He was a model parliamentarian. Each member has to instill in his mind the ideals that he has left behind.

Sir, we may say that death is certain because it is nature's law. He was born here and now he died. We know that he was suffering, and he shared this fact with me. As a parliamentarian, he has been a shining example in India. His death has caused an irreparable loss to this House and to the Communist Party. I may cite him and one of his comrades, Shri M.K. Sundaram, who was a member of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, as an example. They were not having a small house to live in. He has lived up to his Communist principles. He was a trade union leader.

I share the sentiments and the grief expressed by the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, Leaders of other parties and members of this House.

On my behalf and on behalf of the AIADMK, I express my grief and sorrow and offer my heartfelt condolences, through you, Sir, to the bereaved family.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Indrajit Gupta was a senior member of this House and a large hearted personality. I got acquainted with him since the Eleventh Lok Sabha. Whenever he took floor in this House, the whole House gave him a patient hearing and whatever he had to say, he used to speak with firmness. He was a former

Home Minister when he visited Mumbai, he also met the Chief of my party, Shiv Sena, Shri Bala Saheb Thackerey. Even while being a Home Minister, he always sided with reality and truth. He led a simple life. His behaviour served as a model for this House and it would remain so in future also. He used to oppose in clear terms whatever he did not like. He never opposed anyone just for opposition sake.

Shri Yerrannaidu has demanded a memorial in the Parliament. I support the demand. I, on my own behalf and on behalf of my party, Shiv Sena, pay homage to the departed soul and let his soul rest in peace.

[Translation]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are some things which are hard to believe. It is a fact that Indrajit Gupta is no more in this House. It is very hard to believe because for the last many years he had been serving this country through this House.

He had started his political life with the student movement, the youth movement. He contributed to the freedom movement and paid attention to the problems of the labourers of the country and did a lot in this field. He first became a member of this House in 1960 and since then he had been a member of this House. For how many years he was a member is not important, what is more important is how he used his membership. In this Parliament, we can name Barrister Nath Pai and Shri Madhu Limaye among the people who worked for years to maintain the honour of Parliamentary Practice and Procedure and the Parliament itself, and Shri Indrajit Gupta belonged to the same category. He was of Communist ideology but he firmly believed in parliamentary democracy. There were occasions of disagreement, feelings of conflict and aggressiveness but he always maintained the dignity of the House. He worked as the Union Minister of Home Affairs for a few months but throughout his tenure it so appeared that he was not much interested in this responsibility. Giving his opinion to safeguard the interest of the country was what made him happy. Now he is no more. It is a great loss to the parliamentary democracy of the country. A civilized, transparent, truthful personality has left us. I, on behalf of my party and myself pay rich tributes to him.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I share the views expressed in the House by this Leader and Leader of Opposition. I was close to Guptaji. He was my leader in the fifth Lok Sabha and he had been the leader of our party also. Throughout his life he stood by the oppressed, the downtrodden and kept on fighting for their cause. No doubt, he was

from a well off family, but he worked for the poor, the downtrodden. He spent all his life for this. He worked as Vice-President of the trade union wave of the whole world, he worked as the General Secretary of the AITUC, he worked as the General Secretary of the Communist Party and everywhere he earned name.

So, I will say this much that whatever he has done will be remembered for ever and some memorial must be erected here in his memory. With these words I pay my tributes to him.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we all are shocked by the death of Indrajit Babu. He was not only the seniormost member of this House, but he was the best parliamentarian also. He symbolised politics based on values and principles. He had firm faith in parliamentary democracy. I have been observing and listening to him since the Ninth Lok Sabha. I got opportunities to know and understand him closely. Whenever discussion on some important issue was initiated, his turn came after many people on the basis of the numerical strength of the party, but he always put forth his mind in his own unique style. He always put things in a way that was different from his previous speakers and his speech had great impact on the House. Everybody listened to him carefully. We and people of our generation in particular have learnt a lot from him. During the Eleventh Lok Sabha, when he was Minister of Home Affairs, it appeared to me also that he was least interested in this office. There were occasions when this became evident but he was a straightforward person at that time too. This often gave rise to controversies, particularly with regard to the Kashmir problem. In the wake of the prevailing state of affairs at that time in Kashmir and the incidents that took place with some tourists, there was uproar in the House. He had said that people should avoid from going there if the situation there was not conducive. He had said this with great honesty and logically in view of the situation prevailing there. Then he had to face the ire of the Opposition, but this made it clear that as Minister also he said what he thought to be right. The irreparable loss caused by his death cannot be redeemed by anybody, but if we follow the path he has shown, the conduct he has taught, then only we will be able to pay a true tribute to him.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I shall make a special request that Lok Sabha Secretariat should publish a collection of his speeches in the House so that people inside and outside the Parliament may derive inspiration from them and now when the politics based on values and principles is on decline, we might perhaps get some inspiration from his speeches and try to tread the path shown by him. His conduct was quite well even towards his rivals and he had great affection for people like us who were quite younger to him in age. Whenever

we presented a matter properly he encouraged us. Whenever we made a mistake he tried to caution us in his own style. Now that he is no more among us, it appears that we have lost one of our guardians. It is simply impossible to describe his merits in words. We request you to kindly convey our condolence to his family. I, on behalf of my party and myself, pay tribute to him.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR, MEMBER AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the death of Shri Indrajit Gupta has caused the loss of a great patriot, a thinker, a master of parliamentary system, a champion of farmers, labourers and workers and a torch bearer. His death has caused a void not only in the Parliament but also in the politics of India. His absence will always be felt by those engaged in the struggle against suppression. I bow my head to the memory of this great personality.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, myself and my party are with you, the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition and the Hon'ble Leaders of other political parties, in paying tributes and expressing condolence to this great parliamentarian.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also got the opportunity to see and hear the seniormost member having an honourable and dignified personality. He was a superb thinker. Today the news of his sudden death in Kolkata has shocked us. He had been indisposed for some days. I had met him and expressed my hope that he would be allright soon and he had replied with certainty that of course he would be allright. But he is no more now. The country, the House and the whole world has suffered an irreparable loss due to his death. He was a great pillar of the Communist movement. He was an honoured leader. He fought for the farmers and labourers, the downtrodden, for the whole of his life and served the country well. He was a great personality. We learnt a lot from him. When he rose to speak in the House, we listened to him with great attention and derived inspiration from him. He always advocated secularism. His death is an irreparable loss to the country. All the Hon'ble members have rightly pointed out that a memorial should be erected in the memory of such a great personality so that other people may derive inspiration to fight for the poor, the downtrodden and to serve the weaker sections of the society and fight against their exploitation.

With these words, I request you to kindly convey our condolence to his family and party so that they could face this moment of grief with courage.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Indrajitda is no more. The cruel death has snatched him away from our midst.

I join you on behalf of my party, Forward Bloc and myself to pay respect and homage to the memory of Shri Indrajit Gupta.

We lost a good friend of the working class people and the peasantry. Particularly as Left Front members, we lost our guardian.

You rightly said that he was the 'Father of the House' when you first spoke. We did not give importance to that. But today we feel for that. I have been in this august House for a long time. This is my eighth tenure and in this long tenure I have seen many parliamentarians but I must say that Shri Indrajit Gupta is the best among the best parliamentarians.

I pay my respects to his memory.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY, MEMBER: We have known for some time that this was to come. Even so, it is difficult for us to reconcile ourselves to this day.

As a parliamentarian, he was simply incomparable. He was *non pareil.* The vibrant democracy of our country has produced many great parliamentarians starting from Satyamurthy onwards but even so he belonged to his own genre. He was *non pareil* as a parliamentarian. He was *sui generis* as a parliamentarian.

Though he was redoubtable as a parliamentarian, he was childlike when it came to personal interactions. As a human being, he was magnificent. He was *sans par* in that he was a *peer sans reproach,* above reproach. His simplicity used to stand out and the Western Court will stand out as a memorial to his simplicity.

Though he was a first rate Bolshevik, it is ironical that he used to adhere to the parliamentary norms and forms scrupulously and sedulously. For many people like us, he was an icon. We have learnt many a lesson almost at his feet.

Our nation will find it difficult to have another parliamentarian of his stature.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are all deeply grieved at the sad demise of a fatherly figure in the House, Shri Indrajit Gupta.

He was a towering personality. His speeches in the House are an eloquent testimony of his great contribution to nation building.

Shri Indrajit Gupta and myself have throughout our terms been neighbours in the Western Court. He continued in the Western Court even after assuming the august office of the Home Minister of the nation.

We all deeply mourn the loss of this towering personality and dedicated leader of the toiling masses.

On behalf of my party and myself, I would request you to kindly convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

[Translation]

DR. SUHIL KUMAR INDORA, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, today the death of Indrajit Guptaji has caused a loss of a great leader and champion of the common and poor man. Indrajit joined politics and came to Lok Sabha at a time when I was not even born. But whenever we had a political discussion, particularly Guptaji was a fearless and valiant soldier. If there was a discussion in this regard with the Chief Minister of Haryana, Chaudhary Om Prakash Chautala, he told us that Indrajit Gupta, was a mature politician and diplomatic thinker. I, on behalf of my party, Chaudhary Devi Lal ji and Chief Minister of Haryana, Chaudhary Om Prakash Chautala, convey our condolence to his family in this hour of grief and pay tributes to Indrajit Guptaji on behalf of all.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA BOSE, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my Party and on behalf of my leader, Kumari Mamata Banerjee, I would like to add our deepest sense of sorrow at the passing away of Shri Indrajit Gupta. He was the *pro tem* Speaker and I took oath from him three times. I had the good fortune to know him quite well. I remember, when he was the Home Minister, he did not confine himself to his Minister's room, but he used to sit with us in the Central Hall and ask us to share a cup of coffee or may be an *idli* with him. It was a pleasure to listen to him. Whenever he stood up, we all sat up. We knew that we are about to hear a good speech and a sensible thing from him.

Sir, on the last days, I found that he was rather sad. He was sad because the Parliament that he saw when he came here, the dignity of Parliament, the standard of debate that he saw, he thought was there no more. He used to be sad and he used to tell us about it. I think today the best homage that we can pay to him is to re-dedicate ourselves and to say that we shall try our best to keep up the standard of parliamentary debate, the standard of dignity and decorum of the House. I am sure that would be the greatest homage that we can pay to him.

With these words, I add my deepest sense of sorrow on behalf of my party and my colleagues. I do hope that you will convey this to his followers and to his family.

TRIBUTES PAID IN RAJYA SABHA*

SHRI KRISHAN KANT, HON. CHAIRMAN, RAJYA SABHA: Hon'ble members, I refer with profound sorrow to the passing away of Shri Indrajit Gupta, a sitting member of the Lok Sabha, on the 20th February, 2001, after a prolonged illness.

Born in March, 1919 at Calcutta, Shri Gupta had his education at St. Stephen's College, Delhi and at King's College, Cambridge University. A political and social worker, Shri Gupta went underground for one-and-a-half years during 1948-50. He also suffered imprisonment several times. Shri Gupta was General Secretary, AITUC, from 1980 to 1990. He was President of several trade union organisations. Shri Gupta was General Secretary of the Communist Party of India from 1990 to 1996.

Shri Indrajit Gupta started his legislative career when he was elected in 1960 to the 2nd Lok Sabha. Shri Gupta was also a member of the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th Lok Sabhas. He was a Member of the Committee to review the Lok Sabha Secretariat Rules, 1955. He was Chairman of the Committee on Defence and the Committee on Subordinate Legislation. He was also the Chairman, Committee on State Funding of Elections. He was leader of the Communist Party of India parliamentary Party in the Lok Sabha.

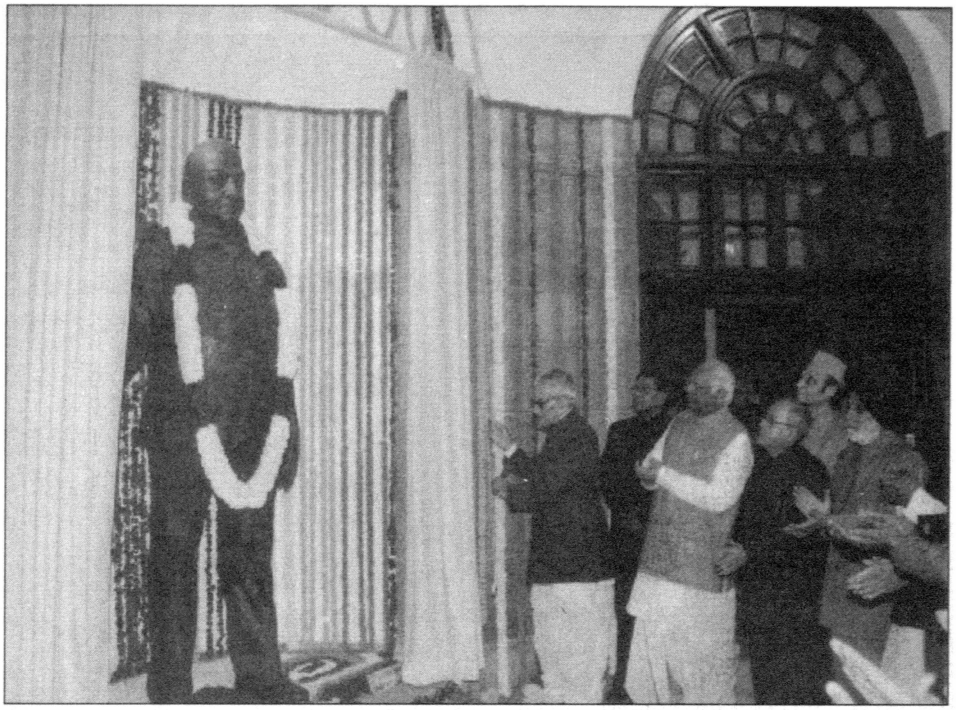
Shri Gupta combined common sense with clarity, balanced judgment with political acumen. A powerful speaker, Shri Gupta was also a champion of the working class and the downtrodden sections of the society. Shri Gupta had also mastery over economic affairs, foreign affairs and defence. His remarkable public life, spanning over four decades was a saga of courage and sacrifice. Shri Gupta was conferred the Best Parliamentarian Award in 1992. Shri Gupta had also the distinction of being the Union Home Minister from 1996 to 1998 in the United Front Government.

In the death of Shri Indrajit Gupta, the country has lost a veteran parliamentarian, a trade union leader and an able administrator.

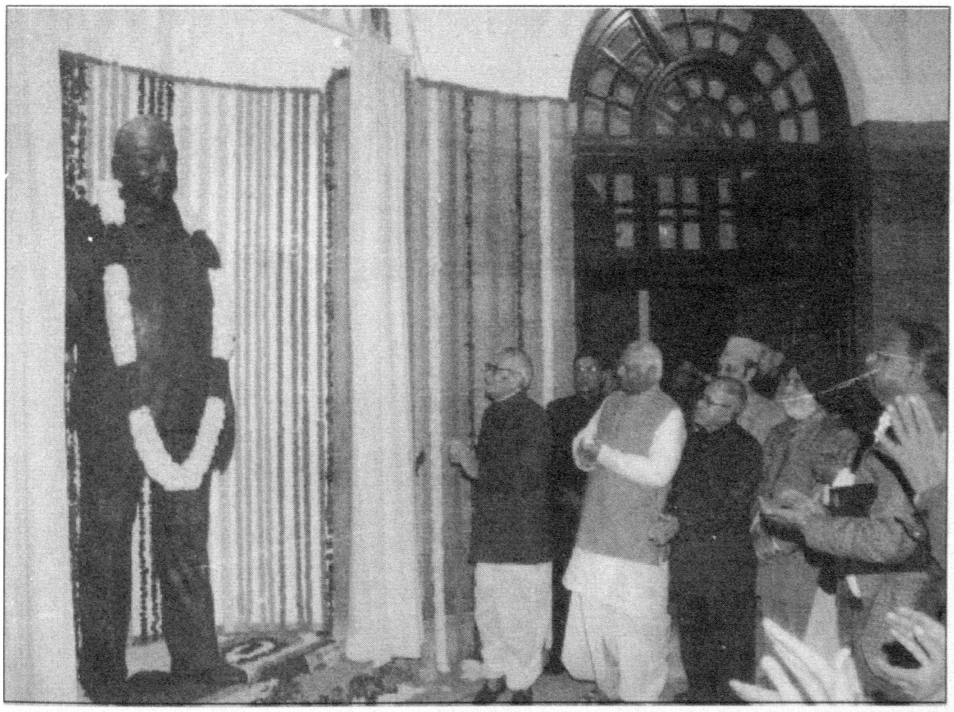
We deeply, mourn the passing away of Shri Indrajit Gupta.

---

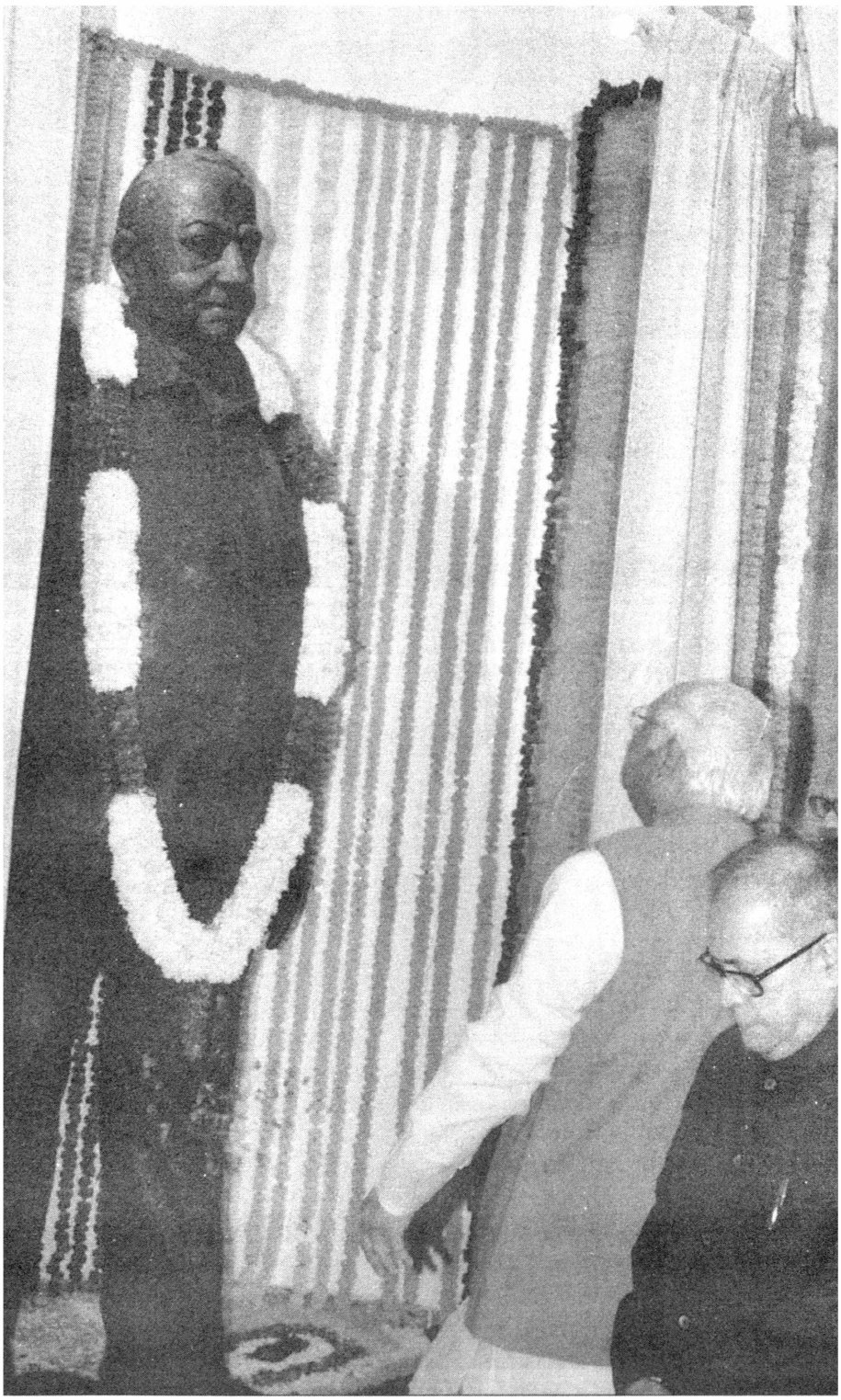
* *R.S. Deb.*, 20 February 2001.



The Vice-President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, unveiling the statue of Shri Indrajit Gupta in Parliament House on 5 December 2006



The Vice-President, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, the Lok Sabha Speaker, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Union Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri Charnjit Singh Atwal, and Dr. Karan Singh, MP, at the unveiling of the statue of Shri Indrajit Gupta

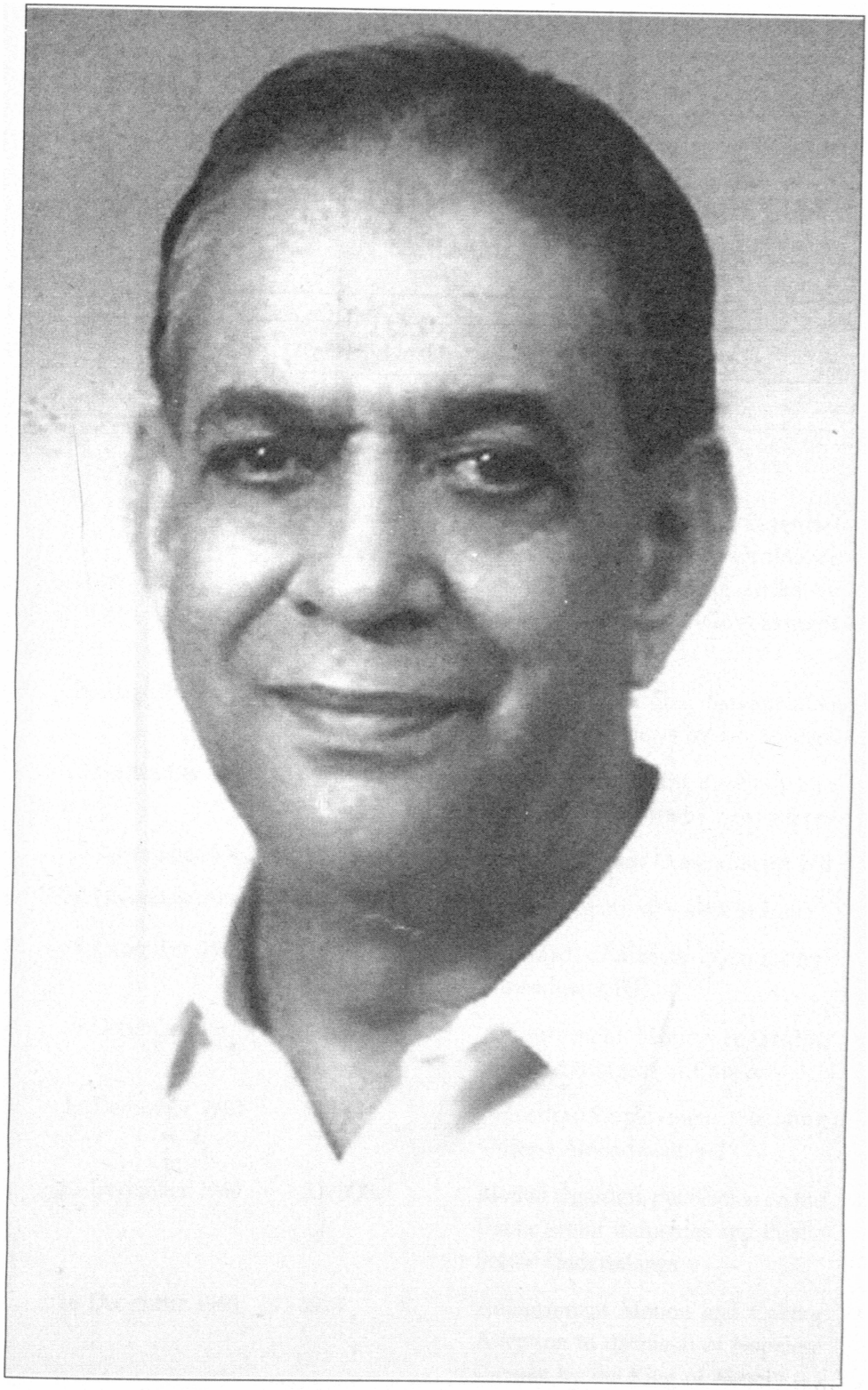


The Lok Sabha Speaker, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, and Union Minister of External Affairs, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, paying tributes to Shri Indrajit Gupta

Dignitaries paying floral tributes to Shri Indrajit Gupta

Dignitaries at the unveiling of the statue of Shri Indrajit Gupta

The distinguished gathering at the statue of
Shri Indrajit Gupta in Parliament House



Shri Indrajit Gupta
(1919-2001)

LIST OF SPEECHES/STATEMENTS BY SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA IN PARLIAMENT (LOK SABHA: 1960-2000)

Sl.No.	Date	Column No.(s)	Title
1	2	3	4
		1960	
1.	9 August 1960	1728-36	Resolution regarding Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance and Motion regarding strike by some Central Government Employees
2.	19 August 1960	3595-3604	Resolution regarding dissemination of news and views by newspapers
3.	3 September 1960	6789-92	Resolution regarding dissemination of news and views by newspapers
4.	15 November 1960	388-93	Indian Museum (Amendment) Bill
5.	8 December 1960	4710-11	Motion regarding sports in India
6.	9 December 1960	4834	Forward Contracts (Regulation) Amendment Bill
7.	9 December 1960	4813-14	Adjournment Motion regarding Indian contingent in Congo
8.	13 December 1960	5303-14	Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Amendment Bill
9.	13 December 1960	5391-98	Motion regarding publication on the Public Sector Industries and Public Sector Undertakings
10.	16 December 1960	5974	Adjournment Motion and Calling Attention to dismissal of Nepalese Cabinet by the King of Nepal

1	2	3	4
		1961	
11.	2 March 1961	2691	Calling Attention to enrolment of Bengalis residing in Assam, on Voters' list
12.	4 March 1961	2935	Calling Attention to rise in jute prices
13.	4 March 1961	3013-16	Resolution regarding prevention of the use of places of religious worship for political propaganda
14.	4 March 1961	3057-60	Resolution regarding Trade Union activities of Government Employees
15.	8 March 1961	3621	Adjournment Motion regarding Accidents in Simlabahal and Badruchuk collieries
16.	8 March 1961	3639-41	Demands for Supplementary Grants (Railways), 1960-61
17.	13 March 1961	4534-39	Demands for Grants (Railways), 1961-62
18.	3 April 1961	8753	Calling Attention to despatch of troops from Lisbon to Goa
19.	3 April 1961	8893-97	Demands for Grants (Ministry of External Affairs), 1961-62
20.	4 April 1961	9135-47	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Labour and Employment), 1961-62
21.	24 April 1961	13387-13402	Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill
22.	10 August 1961	1302-13	Minimum Wages (Amendment) Bill
23.	16 August 1961	2400-01	Calling Attention to block closure by Indian Jute Mills Association
24.	22 August 1961	4076-88	Motion regarding Third Five Year Plan
25.	23 August 1961	4267	Calling Attention to continuance of the Ministry of Rehabilitation
26.	24 August 1961	4695-4709	Discussion regarding scarcity of raw jute

1	2	3	4
27.	25 August 1961	4977-91, 5044-47	Discussion regarding scarcity of raw jute
28.	25 August 1961	4977-91, 5044-47	Resolution regarding fixation of price of jute
29.	8 September 1961	8071	Calling Attention to accidents in certain mines
30.	8 September 1961	8085	Calling Attention to non-reinstatement of some dismissed employees and delay in restoration of recognition of employees' unions and federations
31.	25 November 1961	1313-15	Calling Attention to prices of raw jute
32.	27 November 1961	1590	Adjournment Motion regarding firing by Portuguese on Indian fishing boats
33.	27 November 1961	1606	Statement regarding Finance Minister's visit abroad
34.	29 November 1961	2129-40	Discussion regarding conviction and imprisonment of Col. Bhattacharya
		1962	
35.	13 March 1962	160-78	Dock Workers (Regulation of Employment) Amendment Bill
36.	27 March 1962	2069-73	Demands for Grants (on Account), Railways, 1962-63
37.	28 March 1962	2269-82	Air Corporations (Amendment) Bill
38.	30 March 1962	2763-65	Resolution regarding National Integration Day
39.	2 May 1962	2048, 2050	Calling Attention to need to reconstitute the Calcutta Dock Labour Board
40.	2 May 1962	2077-78	Motion of Thanks on President's Address

1	2	3	4
41.	3 May 1962	2346-50	Calling Attention to threat of resignation by Hooghly pilots
42.	12 May 1962	4237-52	Demands for Grants (Ministry of External Affairs), 1962-63
43.	12 May 1962	4280-88, 4292, 4297	Half-an-hour discussion regarding Hooghly pilots' strike
44.	16 May 1962	4683	Statement regarding stoppage of work by Hooghly pilots
45.	16 May 1962	4791-93	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Mines and Fuel), 1962-63
46.	18 May 1962	5391-96	Resolution regarding Public Sector Enterprises
47.	22 June 1962	12563	Insurance (Amendment) Bill
48.	10 August 1962	1200	Statement regarding Agreement on coal mining in the State of West Bengal
49.	10 August 1962	1202	Business of the House
50.	10 August 1962	1250-56	Resolution regarding representative character of Trade Unions
51.	25 August 1962	3994-4007	Motion regarding Third Five Year Plan
52.	30 August 1962	5034	Calling Attention to accident at South Bulihari Colliery
53.	31 August 1962	5294-95	Calling Attention to Dumraon Railway Accident Inquiry Commission
54.	3 September 1962	5527, 5528	Calling Attention to reported statements made at Djakarta by Shri G.D. Sondhi and the reactions of the Indonesian Government
55.	4 September 1962	5805, 5808	Calling Attention to attack on Indian Embassy at Djakarta
56.	4 September 1962	5931, 5937-39	Constitution (Fourteenth Amendment) Bill

1	2	3	4
57.	7 September 1962	6890	Resolution regarding Ban on communal organizations
58.	15 November 1962	1838-42	Resolution regarding compulsory Military Training
59.	19 November 1962	2248-56	Foreigners Law (Application and Amendment) Bill
60.	22 November 1962	2970, 2972-73, 2975	Business of the House
61.	26 November 1962	3335	Regarding Cease-fire
62.	28 November 1962	3785-91	Employees' Provident Funds (Amendment) Bill
63.	11 December 1962	5268	Business of the House
64.	11 December 1962	5326-37	Modification of Central Apprenticeship Council Rules etc.
65.	11 December 1962	5353-68	Motion regarding maintaining prices of essential commodities at reasonable levels
		1963	
66.	19 February 1963	250-54	Motion regarding maintaining prices of essential commodities at reasonable levels
67.	13 March 1963	3546-63	Budget (General), 1963-64: General Discussion
68.	5 April 1963	7956-74	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1963-64
69.	10 April 1963	8996-9004	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Transport and Communication), 1963-64
70.	19 April 1963	10784-93	Insurance (Amendment) Bill
71.	3 May 1963	13699-13702	Insurance (Amendment) Bill
72.	13 August 1963	171-72	Motion regarding No-confidence in the Council of Ministers
73.	17 August 1963	931-32	Calling Attention to strike by the workers of Bombay Municipality and Electric Supply and Transport Undertakings

1	2	3	4
74.	23 August 1963	2362	Business of the House
75.	23 August 1963	2451-57	Resolution regarding Nationalisation of Banks
76.	26 August 1963	2654-59	Major Port Trusts Bill
77.	26 August 1963	2698-2705	Resolution regarding Report of State Trading Corporation of India
78.	12 September 1963	5916, 5919	Statement regarding air crash near Agra
79.	20 September 1963	7309-25	Discussion regarding NEFA Enquiry
80.	20 September 1963	7309-25	Motion regarding Our Defence Preparedness
81.	19 November 1963	401, 412, 419-20	Statement regarding rice position in the country
82.	19 November 1963	374	Regarding Motion for Adjournment and correction of records
83.	19 November 1963	468-77	Adjournment Motion regarding escape of Mr. Walcott
84.	20 November 1963	770-80	Income Tax (Amendment) Bill
85.	22 November 1963	1209	Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill
86.	27 November 1963	1840	Calling Attention to train-bus collision near Gandhidham, Cutch
87.	27 November 1963	1842-58	Half-an-hour discussion regarding Newsreel on CPI procession in Delhi
88.	29 November 1963	2227-28	Statement regarding reported developments in the Berubari area
89.	29 November 1963	2294-98	Resolution regarding pension for Armed Services
90.	6 December 1963	3447-64	Motion regarding Report on Mid-term Appraisal of Third Five Year Plan
91.	9 December 1963	3661, 3663, 3807-08	Calling Attention to lathi charge on Tibbia College students

1	2	3	4
92.	17 December 1963	5293	Calling Attention to entry of Naga hostiles into Burma, through Manipur on their way to East Pakistan
93.	17 December 1963	5176	Statement by Member
		1964	
94.	12 February 1964	302	Statement by Member
95.	14 February 1964	795	Calling Attention to fire at the Heavy Machine Building Plant at Ranchi
96.	8 April 1964	9921-37	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Steel, Mines and Heavy Engineering), 1964-65
97.	10 April 1964	10318	Calling Attention to suspension of migrants' trains from East Pakistan to India
98.	30 April 1964	13694-98, 13705-11	Industrial Development Bank of India Bill
99.	4 May 1964	14178-83	Discussion regarding Indian Repatriates from newly independent countries of Africa
100.	6 May 1964	14494	Calling Attention to movement of about 200 Naga hostiles towards East Pakistan and entry of about 400 Naga hostiles into Nagaland
101.	6 May 1964	14612	Calling Attention to reported breakdown of milk supply by Delhi Milk Supply Scheme
102.	6 May 1964	14593-603	Slum Areas Amendment (Improvement and Clearance Amendment) Bill
103.	24 September 1964	3492-93	Alleged serious situation in the colliery area of Raniganj
104.	28 September 1964	4046-60	International situation
105.	29 September 1964	4316	Outbreak of fire in Divisional Office of L.I.C.

1	2	3	4
106.	3 October 1964	5238	Resolution regarding Defence of India Act
107.	7 December 1964	3626-32	Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill
		1965	
108.	5 March 1965	2752, 2755-56	Business of the House
109.	10 March 1965	3481	Calling Attention to further detention of Left Communist leaders
110.	10 March 1965	3560-66	Demands for Grants (Railways), 1965-66
111.	30 March 1965	6732-47	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1965-66
112.	12 April 1965	9012	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Rehabilitation), 1965-66
113.	12 April 1965	9070-73	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Labour and Employment), 1965-66
114.	14 April 1965	9327	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Labour and Employment), 1965-66
115.	15 April 1965	9471, 9472-83, 9492	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Transport), 1965-66
116.	19 April 1965	9741	Business of the House
117.	19 April 1965	9743, 9803, 9809, 9814	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Transport), 1965-66
118.	10 May 1965	14182	Calling Attention to the arrest of Sheikh Mohamed Abdullah and Mirza Ahmad Beg
119.	11 May 1965	14430	Half-an-hour discussion regarding Bokaro Steel Plant
120.	16 August 1965	190-205	Motion regarding Indo-Pakistan agreement on Gujarat-West Pakistan Border
121.	18 August 1965	714-15	Motion regarding Indo-Pakistan agreement on Gujarat-West Pakistan Border

1	2	3	4
122.	6-9 September 1965	4009-10, 4040-51, 4253, 4256-57, 4260-61, 4334-40, 4343, 4485-88, 4535-42, 4551-52, 4567-70, 4596-98, 4732-36, 4741-44	Payment of Bonus Bill
123.	6-7 September 1965	4009-10, 4040-51, 4253, 4256-57	Resolution regarding Payment of Bonus Ordinance
124.	10 September 1965	5104	Calling Attention to ransacking of Indian Embassy at Djakarta
125.	15 September 1965	5771-74	Life Insurance Corporation (Amendment) Bill
126.	16 September 1965	6086	Half-an-Hour discussion regarding Bird and Co.
127.	17 September 1965	6211-12	Regarding visit of Members of Parliament to Border Areas
128.	17 September 1965	6248-58	Seamen's Provident Fund Bill
129.	20 September 1965	6497-99	Employees' Provident Fund (Amendment) Bill
130.	21 September 1965	6702-03	Calling Attention to alleged refusal by telegraph authorities at Durgapur to accept telegrams
131.	21 September 1965	6745-47	Indian Works of Defence (Amendment) Bill
132.	23 September 1965	7285	Calling Attention to bombing on civilian population in Amritsar
133.	23 September 1965	7297-7305	Half-an-hour discussion regarding Circular Railway in Calcutta
134.	5 November 1965	725-26	Statement regarding Indo-Pakistan Relations
135.	8 November 1965	886	Calling Attention to impounding of Indian ships and confiscation of jute, tea etc. by Pakistan
136.	8 November 1965	946-52	Railways (Employment of Members of the Armed Forces) Bill

1	2	3	4
137.	10 November 1965	1154-67	Motion regarding payment to World Bank and release of water under Indus Water Treaty
138.	11 November 1965	1395-1403	Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill
139.	12 November 1965	1586-87	Calling Attention to retrenchment in Heavy Engineering Corporation, Ranchi
140.	23 November 1965	3392-3406	Patents Bill
141.	26 November 1965	4219-22, 4233	Resolution regarding modernisation of Indian Navy
142.	2 December 1965	5162	Regarding Question of Privilege
143.	3 December 1965	5509	Calling Attention to reported concentration of Pakistan army with tanks in Barmer sector of Rajasthan
144.	6 December 1965	5708-09	Calling Attention to intrusion of Chinese troops across Thag La Ridge
145.	7 December 1965	4920-5004, 6099-6111	Motion regarding food situation and situation arising out of drought conditions
146.	9 December 1965	6611	Statement regarding applicability of Payment of Bonus Act to public sector undertakings
147.	10 December 1965	6907-08	Discussion regarding closure of Textile Mills
		1966	
148.	17 February 1966	917	Adjournment Motion regarding food situation in West Bengal
149.	17 February 1966	905-12	Calling Attention to reported letter from the President of North Vietnam to the President of India and the reply thereto
150.	22 February 1966	1508	Calling Attention to recent talks between Prime Minister of India and Vice-President of USA

1	2	3	4
151.	23 February 1966	1851	President Address (Motion)
152.	24 February 1966	2089	Calling Attention to talks between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Ghana
153.	4 March 1966	4148	Adjournment Motion and Calling Attention to the situation in West Bengal and Mizo Hills District
154.	8 March 1966	4252	Statement regarding situation in West Bengal
155.	8 March 1966	4300	Adjournment Motion regarding situation in West Bengal
156.	29 March 1966	8457-70	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1966-67
157.	30 March 1966	8732	Adjournment Motion regarding food situation in West Bengal
158.	28 April 1966	13847	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Home Affairs), 1966-67
159.	29 April 1966	14050	Demand for Grants (Ministry of Home Affairs), 1966-67
160.	30 April 1966	14255-73	Finance Bill, 1966
161.	5 May 1966	14760	Statement regarding explosion in Bhusaval Goods Yards
162.	12 May 1966	16346	Regarding point Under Rules 376 and 377
163.	3 August 1966	2431-32	Calling Attention to arrest of Shri Indulal Yajaik, MP and others at Ahmedabad
164.	4 August 1966	2610	Calling Attention to lock-out in New Jemehari Khas and Babisole Collieries
165.	23 August 1966	6430	Statement regarding sale of sub-standard honey and matchboxes by Khadi and Gramodyog Bhavan, New Delhi
166.	24 August 1966	6877-89	Jayanti Shipping Company (Taking over of Management) Bill

1	2	3	4
167.	24 August 1966	6902-08	Half-an-hour discussion regarding export of trucks to South Vietnam
168.	26 August 1966	7435-40	Motion regarding situation on Indo-Pakistan Border
169.	26 August 1966	8587	Statement regarding situation on Indo-Pakistan Border
170.	29 August 1966	7705	Calling Attention to the reported dumping of imported rice into Sea at Cochin Port
171.	5 September 1966	9216-17	Regarding Calling Attention Notice
172.	2 November 1966	493-94	Statement regarding recent tripartite meeting held at Delhi
173.	3 November 1966	809	Regarding Motion for Adjournment
174.	4 November 1966	1209	Business of the House
175.	7 November 1966	1593	Motion of No-confidence in the Council of Ministers
176.	7 November 1966	1679-81	Statement regarding incidents in Delhi
177.	21 November 1966	4476-85	Preventive Detention (Continuance) Bill
178.	22 November 1966	4680	Adjournment Motion regarding Detention of Jagatguru Shankracharya of Puri
179.	24 November 1966	5284, 5289-90	Calling Attention to proposed strike by L.I.C. employees on 25th November, 1966
180.	24 November 1966	5344-47, 5351, 5361, 5389	Motion regarding Notification under the Companies Act
181.	25 November 1966	5636	Calling Attention to threatened closure of cotton mills on account of non-availability of cotton
182.	29 November 1966	5917	Calling Attention to reported likelihood of suspension of U.S. grain shipments

1	2	3	4
183.	30 November 1966	6340-46	Police Forces (Restriction of Rights) Bill
184.	30 November 1966	6326	Statement regarding talks between President of Czechoslovakia and Prime Minister of India
185.	2 December 1966	6965	Calling Attention to eviction of Government employees at Port Blair and arrest of leaders
186.	2 December 1966	7110	Business of the House
187.	3 December 1966	7174	Regarding Calling Attention notices
188.	5 December 1966	7377-78	Statement regarding Programme for general elections, 1967
189.	5 December 1966	7402	Statement regarding raw cotton supply position
		1967	
190.	29 March 1967	1596-1601	Armed Forces (Special Powers) Continuance Bill
191.	31 March 1967	2174-81	Resolution regarding ban on automation
192.	5 April 1967	2907-08	Calling Attention to India's participation in secret Seminar on Asian Defence, held in New Delhi recently with several NATO and SEATO States
193.	6 April 1967	3220-21	Calling Attention to alleged proposal for purchase of Islands in Indian Ocean by U.K. for military bases
194.	8 April 1967	3717-18	Calling Attention to decision regarding aid to India by Aid India Consortium
195.	24 May 1967	568-74	Adjournment Motion regarding agitation by Delhi Police
196.	24 May 1967	508-23	Discussion regarding broadcast of May Day speech of Labour Minister of West Bengal

1	2	3	4
197.	24 May 1967	499-500	Statement regarding U.K.'s renewed application for entry into European Economic Community
198.	25 May 1967	857-59	Calling Attention to firing by Pakistani Forces on Indian Border Patrol near Akhnoor
199.	29 May 1967	1419-30	Calling Attention to alleged interference by Union Home Minister in regard to gheraos in West Bengal
200.	29 May 1967	1528	Half-an-hour discussion regarding supply of U.S. arms to Pakistan
201.	31 May 1967	2030-31	Calling Attention to talks between Chief Minister of Kerala and Union Food Minister
202.	1 June 1967	2355-57	Proposed retrenchment of Defence workers
203.	2 [illegible] 1967	2677-78	Calling Attention to Government's refusal to raise D.A. of Central Government Employees
204.	6 June 1967	3314	Statement regarding developments in West Asia
205.	9 June 1967	4161	Statement regarding delay in the arrival of foodships in India due to closure of Suez Canal
206.	27 June 1967	7859-70	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1967-68
207.	27 June 1967	7953-54	Half-an-hour discussion regarding strikes and labour agitations
208.	26 July 1967	14575-84	Finance (No. 2) Bill, 1967
209.	27 July 1967	15240-336	Finance (No. 2) Bill, 1967
210.	31 July 1967	15916-17, 15947-53	Tea (Amendment) Bill
211.	7 August 1967	17543-44	Calling Attention to the alleged manhandling of some members of Parliament by the Police at the Prime Minister's residence

1	2	3	4
212.	7 August 1967	17682-88, 18735-36	Motion regarding food situation in the country
213.	11 August 1967	19029-33	Resolution regarding Wage Freeze Policy
214.	15 November 1967	846-53	Motion regarding Governors of States
215.	28 November 1967	3227-29	Cotton Textile Companies (Management of Undertakings and Liquidation or Reconstruction) Bill
216.	12 December 1967	6313-15	Calling Attention to the reported American Interference with the last general elections in India
217.	16 December 1967	7504-72	Official Languages (Amendment) Bill
218.	19 December 1967	8128	Arrest of Dr. Ranen Sen
219.	19-20 December 1967	8214, 8220-21, 8536-64	Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Bill
220.	21 December 1967	8843-46	Demands for Excess Grants (General), 1964-65
221.	21 December 1967	8843-46	Demands for Supplementary Grants (General), 1967-68
222.	22 December 1967	9342-50	Motion regarding International situation
		1968	
223.	14 February 1968	594-95	Adjournment Motion regarding disturbances in Assam
224.	15 February 1968	1124-37	Motion of Thanks on President's Address
225.	23 February 1968	3129-33	Resolution regarding defence needs of India
226.	21 March 1968	2277-89	West Bengal State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Bill
227.	1 April 1968	1225-35	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1968-69

1	2	3	4
228.	4 April 1968	2284-86	Statement regarding strike at Calcutta port
229.	17 April 1968	1279-80	Half-an-hour discussion regarding Haldia-Barauni pipeline
230.	18 April 1968	1424	Calling Attention to reported assault by certain army officers on civilians including PTI officials at Guwahati
231.	2 May 1968	1421	Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill: presentation of petition
232.	3 May 1968	1895-96	Resolution regarding diplomatic recognition of German Democratic Republic
233.	23 July 1968	874-75	Border Security Force Bill
234.	31 July 1968	3114-15	Calling Attention to talks held with US officials in Delhi
235.	1 August 1968	3611	Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill
236.	1 August 1968	3490	Calling Attention to Czech-Soviet dispute
237.	2 August 1968	3885-86	Regarding Calling Attention notices
238.	5 August 1968	295-305, 351	Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill
239.	5 August 1968	239-41	Calling Attention to revelation made in US Congressional testimony regarding collection of information of defence interest to USA from Himalayan border
240.	6 August 1968	641, 649-51, 671-72, 677-78	Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill
241.	27 August 1968	2313-15	Discussion regarding Electricity Corporation
242.	29 August 1968	3029-34	Resolution regarding Proclamation in relation to Punjab
243.	29 August 1968	3029-34	Punjab State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Bill
244.	18 November 1968	180-82	Calling Attention to acute shortage of petrol in Calcutta

1	2	3	4
245.	18 November 1968	225-32, 242, 244-46	Central Industrial Security Force Bill
246.	19 November 1968	249-308-10	Central Industrial Security Force Bill
247.	20 November 1968	152-61	Calling Attention to cornering of IILS Co. Shares
248.	21 November 1968	214-16	Deposit Insurance Corporation (Amendment) Bill
249.	26 November 1968	327	Indian Railways (Amendment) Bill
250.	27 November 1968	179-99	Indian Railways (Amendment) Bill
251.	27 November 1968	167	Strike by LIC employees
252.	28 November 1968	215-17	Indian Railways (Amendment) Bill
253.	3 December 1968	254-58	Motion regarding final report of road transport taxation enquiry committee
		1969	
254.	27 February 1969	236-48	Budget (Railways), 1969-70—General Discussion
255.	27 February 1969	304-07	Resolution regarding functioning of Central Services
256.	31 March 1969	275-76	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Home Affairs), 1969-70
257.	3 April 1969	270-82, 287	Demand for Grants (Ministry of Industrial Development, Internal Trade and Company Affairs), 1969-70
258.	9 April 1969	153-58	Calling Attention to alleged firing on the employees of Gun and Shell Factory Cosipore, Calcutta
259.	22 July 1969	217-19	Calling Attention to reported building of a new road by the Chinese inside the Indian territory
260.	25 July 1969	382-83	Half-an-hour discussion regarding oil drilling at Bodra in West Bengal
261.	14 August 1969	306-12	Resolution regarding nationalisation of foreign trade

1	2	3	4
262.	18 August 1969	235-40	Calling Attention to supply of U.S. arms to Pakistan
263.	21 August 1969	251	Calling Attention to resignation of Directors of certain National Laboratories
264.	3 December 1969	196	Calling Attention to reported hunger strike by Chief Minister of West Bengal
265.	8 December 1969	229	Proposed strike by LIC employees
266.	9 December 1969	209	Calling Attention to reported exodus of people of Indian origin from Malaysia
267.	22 December 1969	372-73	Half-an-hour discussion regarding change in LIC premium rates
268.	24 December 1969	521-26	Resolution regarding Income-tax, Wealth-tax etc. of the Union Food Minister
		1970	
269.	9 March 1970	483-96	Budget (Railway), 1970-71-General Discussion
270.	31 March 1970	205-10, 232-33	Calcutta Port (Amendment) Bill
271.	31 March 1970	205-10	Resolution regarding Calcutta Port (Amendment) Ordinance
272.	2 April 1970	205-12	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Home Affairs), 1970-71
273.	17 April 1970	190-94	Calling Attention to reported ransacking of Gandhi Centre at Jadavpur University
274.	24 April 1970	210-11	Appointment of Third Pay Commission (Matter under Rule 377)
275.	24 April 1970	302-03	Half-an-hour discussion regarding U.S.A.'s National Arms Policy towards Pakistan
276.	29 April 1970	208-10	Calling Attention to reported resignation of Shri A.K. Sarkar from Chairmanship of Inquiry Committee on C.S.I.R.

1	2	3	4
277.	30 April 1970	158-62	Calling Attention to reported decision of Bhutan to apply for membership of U.N.O.
278.	1 May 1970	322-23	Resolution regarding Economic and Social Problems of West Bengal
279.	11 May 1970	232-34	Calling Attention to India's reported protest against U.S. Vice President's remarks
280.	15 May 1970	254-69	Resolution regarding economic and social problems of West Bengal
281.	11 July 1970	211	Calling Attention to reported intrusion of Pakistani plane into Indian Territory
282.	29 July 1970	234-36	Calling Attention to anti-Indian demonstration in Saigon
283.	30 July 1970	346	Discussion regarding migration of Hindu minorities from East Pakistan
284.	30 July 1970	225-27	Calling Attention to killing of four Harijans in Tamdi Village in Sambalpur District of Orissa
285	31 July 1970	227-28	Business of the House
286.	6 August 1970	358-62, 370-75	Discussion regarding lathi charge by C.R.P. in Jadavpur University and closure of the University
287.	6 August 1970	341-48	Dock Workers' (Regulation of Employment) Amendment Bill
288.	7 August 1970	242	Business of the House
289.	7 August 1970	291-96	Resolution regarding economic and social problems of West Bengal
290.	10 August 1970	248-67	Reported delay in payment of salaries to teachers in West Bengal
291.	11 August 1970	365-75	Discussion regarding migration of Hindu minorities from East Pakistan

1	2	3	4
292.	11 August 1970	265-67	Calling Attention to reported decision of Pakistan Government to dispose off Indian property
293.	12 August 1970	301-02	Half-an-hour discussion regarding Indo-Nepal trade talks
294.	13 August 1970	257-58	Business Advisory Committee—Fifty Second Report
295.	14 August 1970	301-09	Half-an-hour discussion regarding supply of Soviet arms to Pakistan
296.	19 August 1970	241-52	Discussion regarding land reform measure and movement for occupation of lands
297.	25 August 1970	240-49, 281-89	Resolution regarding proclamation in relation to West Bengal
298.	25 August 1970	240-49, 281-89	West Bengal Budget, 1970-71
299.	25 August 1970	240-49	Demand for Grants (West Bengal), 1970-71
300.	25 August 1970	281-89	Demand for Grants (West Bengal), 1970-71
301.	26 August 1970	224-26	Demands for Supplementary Grants (General), 1970-71
302.	28 August 1970	219-30	Calling Attention to reported Government decision to bring ashes supposed to be of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose from Japan to India
303.	28 August 1970	241	Business of the House
304.	29 August 1970	70-74	Patents Bill
305.	31 August 1970	213-18	Calling Attention to reported pilfering and destructive activities on Haldia-Barauni Pipeline near West Bengal-Bihar border
306.	3 September 1970	50-52	Criminal Law (Second Amendment) Bill—Introduction

1	2	3	4
		1971	
307.	2 February 1971	196-98	Motion regarding conduct of member during President's Address
308.	22 March 1971	9-11	Felicitations on elections of Speaker
309.	29 March 1971	85-86	Situation in East Pakistan
310.	31 March 1971	142-59	Motion regarding President's Address
311.	2 April 1971	196-98	Motion regarding conduct of member during President's Address
312.	24 May 1971	3-4	Obituary references
313.	24 May 1971	142-44	Calling Attention regarding reported intrusion of Pakistan army into Indian territory on the East Bengal Border
314.	24 May 1971	156-57	Regarding Adjournment Motion
315.	27 May 1971	207	Calling Attention regarding Pakistani Military shelling on the Eastern border
316.	1 June 1971	161	Statement regarding Nomenclatures of Ministries
317.	3 June 1971	183-86	Calling Attention regarding reported discovery of a pro-Pakistan espionage ring in Calcutta
318.	3 June 1971	217-36	Budget (General), 1971-72: General Discussion
319.	4 June 1971	152-53	Calling Attention regarding reported spreading of Polio in Delhi
320.	4 June 1971	155, 157	Regarding situation in West Bengal
321.	7 June 1971	118, 126	Calling Attention regarding outbreak of cholera in an epidemic form, among the refugees from Bangladesh
322.	7 June 1971	210	Half-an-hour discussion regarding setting up of Jute Mills in Orissa and other States

1	2	3	4
323.	9 June 1971	174-75	Regarding relief material for Bangladesh refugees
324.	11 June 1971	132-36	Calling Attention regarding reported refusal of some States to accommodate Bangladesh evacuees
325.	18 June 1971	215-303, 353-86, 387-92	Maintenance of Internal Security Bill
326.	22 June 1971	165-66	Calling Attention regarding reported air dropping of Chinese literature by a Chinese plane
327.	2 July 1971	241-46, 274-75, 279	Resolution regarding recognition of Bangladesh
328.	6 July 1971	173-77	Calling Attention regarding reported supply of arms to Pakistan by USSR and France
329.	6 July 1971	211-18	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Petroleum & Chemicals), 1971-72
330.	7 July 1971	147	Statement regarding railway accident in the Sealdah Division of Eastern Railway
331.	8 July 1971	193-205	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1971-72
332.	14 July 1971	163-68	Calling Attention regarding reported killing in prison of five political prisoners in Alipore special jail
333.	14 July 1971	298-303	Half-an-Hour discussion regarding reciprocal exchange of films between India USSR and USA
334.	16 July 1971	258-60	Resolution regarding recognition to Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam etc.
335.	29 July 1971	146-49	Calling Attention regarding reported recent Pakistani shelling into Indian territory on Assam and Tripura border

1	2	3	4
336.	2 August 1971	143-47	Resolution regarding constitution of Railway Convention Committee
337.	3 August 1971	172-81	The Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill
338.	4 August 1971	336, 347-50	The Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill
339.	15 November 1971	202, 205	Adjournment Motion regarding Law and order situation in West Bengal
340.	16 November 1971	210-19	Calling Attention to price rise of essential commodities
341.	17 November 1971	253-63	Motion regarding law and order situation in West Bengal
342.	22 November 1971	260-61	Calling Attention to reported Eviction Notices served on Central Govt. Employees in Kanpur
343.	22 November 1971	275	Tax on Postal Articles Bill
344.	23 November 1971	217-19, 222	Calling Attention to attack on the Times of India office by followers of Divine Light Mission
345.	23 November 1971	236-38	Stamp and Excise Duties (Amendment) Bill
346.	24 November 1971	283	Small Coins (Offences) Bill
347.	25 November 1971	238-42	Statutory Resolution regarding Stamp and Excise Duties (Amendment) Ordinance
348.	26 November 1971	214-18	Regarding Calling Attention notices
349.	29 November 1971	247-49	Reported statement by Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad
350.	30 November 1971	245-55	The Constitution (Twenty-fifth Amendment) Bill
351.	1 December 1971	243-46	Calling Attention to reported piling up of raw jute stocks in Bihar
352.	1 December 1971	385-506	The Constitution (Twenty-fifth Amendment) Bill

1	2	3	4
353.	3 December 1971	205-08	Regarding situation on India-Pakistan Border
354.	3 December 1971	289-96	Freedom Fighters (Appreciation of Services) Bill
355.	4 December 1971	46-52	Defence of India Bill
356.	4 December 1971	88, 90, 97-101	Defence of India Bill
357.	4 December 1971	5-7	Resolution regarding Proclamation of Emergency
358.	15 December 1971	62-65	Naval and Aircraft Prize Bill
359.	16 December 1971	25-26	Companies (Surcharge on Income Tax) Bill
360.	16 December 1971	13-18	Industries Development and Regulation (Amendment) Bill
361.	18 December 1971	6-8	Union Territories Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill
362.	21 December 1971	19-24	Newspaper (Price Control) Bill
		1972	
363.	14 March 1972	1-2	Death of Shri A.V. Raghavan
364.	17 March 1972	215	Budget (Railways), 1972-73—General Discussion
365.	17 March 1972	297-98	Freedom Fighters (Appreciation of Services) Bill: by Prof. S.L. Saksena
366.	21 March 1972	169-82	Budget (General), 1972-73—General Discussion
367.	22 March 1972	124-25	Calling Attention to situation arising out of lack of sale of cotton in Gujarat and some other states due to imposition of certain control
368.	24 March 1972	142-43	Regarding Calling Attention notice
369.	24 March 1972	234	Resolution regarding unemployment problem
370.	24 March 1972	243-53	Resolution regarding industrial relations and labour policy

1	2	3	4
371.	3 April 1972	201	Calling Attention to reported disruption of banking system in Andhra Pradesh
372.	4 April 1972	189-93	Indian Copper Corporation (Taking Over of Management) Bill
373.	5 April 1972	2-3	Obituary reference
374.	5 April 1972	132-33	National Service Bill
375.	7 April 1972	249-54	Resolution regarding industrial relations and labour policy
376.	7 April 1972	68-78	Question of Privilege regarding reported statement of Government counsel before Takru Commission regarding 66th Report of Committee on Public Undertakings (Matter under Rule 377)
377.	10 April 1972	69-71	Calling Attention to reported threat of use of nuclear weapons by USA against North Vietnam
378.	11 April 1972	128-33	Calling Attention to reported influx of Bihari muslims of Bangladesh into Bihar
379.	13 April 1972	172-79	Demands for Grants (Department of Science and Technology), 1972-73
380.	18 April 1972	145-46	Question of Privilege regarding reported statement of Government counsel before Takru Commission regarding 66th Report of Committee on Public Undertakings (Matter under Rule 377)
381.	20 April 1972	98-99	Calling Attention to reported infiltration of Pakistani Razakars into India
382.	21 April 1972	160-67	Calling Attention to reported action sought against Indian delegation to the I.C.C. and Indian nationals in South Vietnam
383.	4 May 1972	190-96	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals), 1972-73

1	2	3	4
384.	8 May 1972	3-4	Death of Shri D. Sanjivayya
385.	9 May 1972	408-11	Calling Attention to reported Pakistani attack on India positions in Tithwal sector of Jammu & Kashmir
386.	9 May 1972	417	Regarding developments in Vietnam
387.	15 May 1972	212	Regarding Railwaymen's strike in Barauni area for grant of project allowance
388.	15 May 1972	219, 224-25, 232-35	Regarding alleged insult of certain MPs by the Minister of Railways
389.	15 May 1972	252-60	Finance Bill, 1972
390.	17 May 1972	154-63	Regarding Calling Attention notices
391.	23 May 1972	263-68	Discussion regarding drought conditions in West Bengal
392.	25 May 1972	224-31	Motion regarding statement of suicide by Dr. V.H. Shah, a Scientist of IARI, New Delhi
393.	26 May 1972	186-89	Question of Privilege regarding alleged misleading of Committee on Public Undertaking by Managing Director of National Industrial Development Corporation Ltd.
394.	30 May 1972	161	Extension of session
395.	30 May 1972	232-33	Motion regarding suspension of Rule 74 in respect of General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Bill
396.	31 May 1972	276-84	Motion regarding allegation of publication of large number of posters by a company in violation of Company Law
397.	31 July 1972	233-34	General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Bill—Extension of time for presentation of report of J.C.

1	2	3	4
398.	1 August 1972	203, 208-09	Business Advisory Committee—Fourteenth Report
399.	1 August 1972	217	Constitution of Tea Board (Matter under rule 377)
400.	1 August 1972	233-44	Motion regarding Statement on agreement on Bilateral relations between India and Pakistan
401.	2 August 1972	166	Regarding expunctions from proceedings
402.	3 August 1972	246-47	Coking Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Bill
403.	8 August 1972	358-60	Diplomatic relations (Vienna Convention) Bill for consideration as reported by S.C.
404.	8 August 1972	350, 352	Regarding expunctions from proceedings
405.	8 August 1972	340	Regarding price of sugar
406.	9 August 1972	194	Calling Attention to reported incident of burning alive of Harijans in Machhariya village of Moradabad distt. in U.P.
407.	10 August 1972	279-80	Motion regarding unprecedented rise in prices of essential commodities
408.	11 August 1972	274-92	Resolution regarding problems of economic stagnation of West Bengal
409.	11 August 1972	318-322	Half-an-hour discussion regarding grant of pensions to freedom fighters
410.	21 August 1972	2-3	Obituary reference: death of Dr. A.G. Sonar
411.	22 August 1972	179-88	Resolution regarding disapproval of Indian Iron and Steel Company (Taking over of Management) Ordinance
412.	22 August 1972	172-88, 215-25	Indian Iron and Steel Company (Taking over of Management) Bill

1	2	3	4
413.	22 August 1972	158, 161, 164, 167	Regarding Incidents at Shahdara
414.	25 August 1972	190	Business of the House
415.	25 August 1972	270, 277-85	Resolution regarding urgent problems of economic stagnation of West Bengal
416.	26 August 1972	10-11	Business of the House
417.	28 August 1972	201-02, 206	Adjournment Motion regarding curtailment of freedom of Press in West Bengal
418.	28 August 1972	227-28, 242-50	General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Bill as reported by J.C.
419.	29 August 1972	175, 177, 181-83, 188, 215-18	Question of Privilege regarding alleged contempt of House by member
420.	30 August 1972	218	Petition regarding grievances of employees of Shipping Corporation of India Ltd., Calcutta
421.	2 September 1972	18-19	Statement regarding alleged harassment and ill-treatment of member
422.	2 September 1972	24-25, 53	Business of the House
423.	2 September 1972	44-51	Former Secretary of State Service Officers (Conditions of Service) Bill
424.	4 September 1972	29	Statement regarding Asians in Uganda
425.	4 September 1972	17-20	Regarding publication of Malaviya Committee Report
426.	4 November 1972	204	Calling Attention to recent disturbances in Assam on language issue
427.	13 November 1972	8-10	Obituary references
428.	13 November 1972	242-44, 248-50	Adjournment Motion regarding rise in prices

1	2	3	4
429.	14 November 1972	264	Suspension of member (Shri Jyotirmoy Basu)
430.	21 November 1972	199-200, 202-10	Calling Attention to Supreme Court Judgement on Mulki Rules in Andhra Pradesh
431.	22 November 1972	230, 233	Regarding Mulki Rules
432.	22 November 1972	223-24	Calling Attention to reported power shortage in U.C.
433.	23 November 1972	206-08	Demands for Excess Grants (Railways), 1970-71
434.	24 November 1972	245	Business of the House
435.	27 November 1972	242-43	Calling Attention to reported failure of Fish Corporation to import fish from Bangladesh
436.	27 November 1972	253-54	Motion regarding Business Advisory Committee Report
437.	28 November 1972	209-15	Calling Attention to recent increase in IAF flying accidents
438.	28 November 1972	285-96	Motion regarding Twelfth Report of the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities
439.	29 November 1972	217	Examination of 'Balyogeshwar' by Customs Authorities (Matter under Rule 377)
440.	30 November 1972	328-30	Twelfth Report of the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities
441.	5 December 1972	235-38	Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Bill: Motion to pass
442.	6 December 1972	270-79, 296, 316-18	Motion regarding expansion of Durgapur Alloy Steel Plant
443.	6 December 1972	219	Calling Attention to situation arising out of recent demands of Delhi University Students
444.	7 December 1972	146-47	Regarding Motion for Adjournment
445.	12 December 1972	232-50	Discussion regarding growing CIA activities in India

1	2	3	4
446.	13 December 1972	210-12	Regarding Question of Privilege (query)
447.	18 December 1972	228-29	Business of the House
448.	18 December 1972	258-68	Mulki Rules Bill—introduction
449.	18 December 1972	279-87	Sick Textile Undertakings (Taking over of Management) Bill
450.	19 December 1972	230-31	U.S. bombing in North Vietnam (Matter Under Rule 377)
451.	21 December 1972	206	Regarding proceedings of the House
452.	22 December 1972	253-54	Regarding charges against Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and his Cabinet colleagues
		1973	
453.	21 February 1973	386-405	Motion of Thanks on the President's Address
454.	23 February 1973	230-31	Alleged wrong Statements by Ministers regarding Maruti car
455.	23 February 1973	202-14	Calling Attention to impact on Indian rupee of U.S. Government's decision to devalue dollar
456.	27 February 1973	218	Regarding arrest of Haryana teachers in Delhi
457.	1 March 1973	249-59	Resolution regarding Proclamation in relation to the State of Andhra Pradesh
458.	12 March 1973	235-40	Calling Attention to reported purchase by foreign interests of shareholdings in metro theatres in Calcutta and Bombay without permission
459.	15 March 1973	197-99	Regarding demand for inclusion of Nepali in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution
460.	15 March 1973	161-76	Calling Attention to proposed resumption of U.S. arms supply to Pakistan

1	2	3	4
461.	15 March 1973	310	Andhra Pradesh Budget, 1973-74
462.	16 March 1973	245-47, 256, 257-60	Coal Mines (Taking over of Management) Bill
463.	20 March 1973	226-32	Demands for Supplementary Grants (Railways), 1972-73
464.	30 March 1973	197, 199-200	Alleged wrong Statement by Ministers regarding Maruti car
465.	30 March 1973	233-40	Manipur Budget, 1973-74 General Discussion and Demands for Grants (on Account), 1973-74
466.	2 April 1973	283	Report of Third Central Pay Commission laid on the Table
467.	2 April 1973	242-49	Calling Attention to reported failure of the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation to conclude contracts with USSR and Poland for export of Indian Mica
468.	4 April 1973	206-07	Regarding reported Statement of Attorney-General before Supreme Court about amending Maintenance of Internal Security Act
469.	16 April 1973	3-4	Obituary reference: Death of Shri Teja Singh Swatantra
470.	16 April 1973	424-25	Half-an-hour discussion regarding purchase of shares of Shaw Wallace & Co.
471.	16 April 1973	275	Calling Attention to reported closure of Aligarh Muslim University
472.	17 April 1973	188-93	Calling Attention to reported indefinite strike by thousands of textile workers in Delhi
473.	18 April 1973	248	Health of Shri Nagabhushan Patnaik (Matter under Rule 377)
474.	24 April 1973	253	Demands for Grants (Ministry of External Affairs), 1973-74

1	2	3	4
475.	25 April 1973	340-346, 379, 382	Discussion regarding breakdown of power supply in Delhi
476.	25 April 1973	240	Statement regarding breakdown of power supply in Delhi
477.	25 April 1973	269-81	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1973-74
478.	25 April 1973	253	Motion passed by Fourth Lok Sabha on the Twelfth Report of Committee of Privileges (Matter under Rule 377)
479.	27 April 1973	250-51	Business of the House
480.	27 April 1973	240	Statement regarding Guru Gobind Singh Medical College, Faridabad
481.	8 May 1973	323-28	North-Eastern Hill University Bill
482.	9 May 1973	200-01	North-Eastern Hill University Bill
483.	9 May 1973	173-78	Calling Attention to reported arrest of Bengalis in Islamabad by Pakistan authorities
484.	10 May 1973	175, 177	Statement regarding National Rayon Corporation Ltd.
485.	14 May 1973	76-83	Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Bill
486.	14 May 1973	21-22	Regarding arrest of Shri Jambuwant Dhote
487.	14 May 1973	35-36	Regarding Discussion on Pay Commission Report
488.	15 May 1973	44-45	Reported appointment after retirement of Vice-Admiral B.A. Samson on Board of Directors of Philips (India) Ltd.
489.	15 May 1973	14-16	Question of Privilege regarding arrest of Shri Jambuwant Dhote, MP.
490.	27 May 1973	234	Petition regarding rising prices, unemployment etc.
491.	23 July 1973	263-264, 295-311, 437-46	Adjournment Motion regarding abnormal rise in prices of essential commodities

1	2	3	4
492.	24 July 1973	257	Pay Commission Report
493.	1 August 1973	243	Question of Privilege regarding alleged assault on member by Madhya Pradesh Police Officials
494.	1 August 1973	202, 212	Calling Attention to proposal to convert Indian Council of Agricultural Research into a Department of the Ministry of Agriculture
495.	7 August 1973	305-06	Indian Railways (Amendment) Bill
496.	7 August 1973	312, 317	Resolution regarding Proclamation in relation to Uttar Pradesh
497.	9 August 1973	202	Regarding bombings in Cambodia
498.	9 August 1973	295-305	Discussion regarding report of the accident of Indian Airlines Boeing on 31 May 1973
499.	24 August 1973	291-302	Foreign Exchange Regulation Bill
500.	1 September 1973	11-13	Code of Criminal Procedure Bill
501.	3 September 1973	1-13	Adjournment Motion regarding violation of assurance on takeover of wholesale trade in Rice
502.	5 September 1973	61-62	Regarding cut in wheat quota to the States
503.	27 November 1973	204-06	Business of the House
504.	28 November 1973	392-99	Discussion regarding reorganization of ICAR
505.	5 December 1973	197	Regarding admissibility of questions
506.	6 December 1973	198-200	Burn Company and Indian Standard Wagon Company (Taking over Management) Bill-Motion to pass
507.	7 December 1973	239-51	Resolution regarding collective security in Asia
508.	22 December 1973	25-26	Statement regarding lockout in I.A.C.
509.	22 December 1973	135-37	Statement regarding strike in Locorunning Staff

1	2	3	4
		1974	
510.	25 February 1974	408-19	Motion of Thanks on President's Address
511.	5 March 1974	204-10	ESSO (Acquisition of Undertakings in India) Bill—Motion to pass, as amended
512.	5 March 1974	174-75	Calling Attention to reported violent attacks by Shiv Sena on linguistic minorities in Maharashtra
513.	10 March 1974	241-42	Statement regarding alleged payment charged from RPF personnel at Lakhiserai Railway Station
514.	11 March 1974	222-23	Reported killing of two Adivasis and injuring several others by a landlord in a village in Bihar (Matter under Rule 377)
515.	12 March 1974	276-82	Budget (Railways), 1974-75-General Discussion
516.	13 March 1974	293-308	Budget (General), 1974-75-Genreal Discussion
517.	25 March 1974	202-04	Demonstration by University and College teachers before Parliament House (Matter under Rule 377)
518.	29 March 1974	309-16	Resolution regarding policy in respect of prices and agricultural production
519.	2 April 1974	238-41	Regarding President's order in regard to authorization of expenditure out of the Consolidated Fund of Pondicherry
520.	3 April 1974	197-201	Distribution of allegedly offensive calendars to MPs.
521.	3 April 1974	259-70	Discussion regarding Procurement and Pricing Policy of Wheat for 1974-75 season

1	2	3	4
522.	9 April 1974	208-12	Regarding inaccuracy in Minister's Statement on alleged bayonet charge by RPF personnel at Lakhimpur railway station
523.	10 April 1974	364-65	Statement regarding New Friends Cooperative House Building Society
524.	10 April 1974	224-25	Question of Privilege regarding publication in the Press about the deliberations of the meeting held by the Speaker on Presidential Order in respect of Pondicherry
525.	11 April 1974	225-28	Regarding President's order in regard to authorization of expenditure out of the Consolidated Fund of Pondicherry
526.	11 April 1974	206-07	Question of Privilege regarding statement on New Friends Cooperative House Building Society
527.	15 April 1974	229-30	Adjournment Motion regarding firing by BSF at Gaya
528.	16 April 1974	242-43	Regarding proposed strike by railwaymen
529.	16 April 1974	206-12	Calling Attention to reported suicide by an Assistant Station Director of the Television Central, Delhi
530.	17 April 1974	223-26	Reported permission to General Motors Company of USA to take over one-third of equity shares of Hindustan Motors (Matter under Rule 377)
531.	18 April 1974	275-81	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals), 1974-75
532.	25 April 1974	217-28	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1974-75
533.	25 April 1974	187-89	Pilferage near Asansol from Barauni-Haldia oil pipeline (Matter under Rule 377)

1	2	3	4
534.	9 May 1974	239-40	Motion regarding extension of current session of Lok Sabha
535.	9 May 1974	311-31	Motion regarding No-confidence in the Council of Ministers
536.	22 July 1974	218, 22	Regarding Ordinances laid on the Table
537.	23 July 1974	301-16	Motion regarding No-confidence in the Council of Ministers
538.	7 August 1974	139	Adjournment Motion regarding alleged misuse of Government machinery to help rally organized by Youth Wing of Congress Party
539.	8 August 1974	218-26	Discussion regarding recent atomic explosion conducted by Atomic Energy Commission
540.	9 August 1974	172-80	Calling Attention to acute shortage of paper and non-availability of text-books and exercise books in the country
541.	9 August 1974	139	Adjournment Motion regarding alleged misuse of Government machinery to help rally organized by Youth Wing of Congress Party
542.	9 August 1974	164-65	Arrest of Smt. Birbha Ghosh Goswami
543.	19 August 1974	273, 276	Additional Emoluments (Compulsory Deposit) Bill-Introduction
544.	20 August 1974	141-42, 145-47, 149, 155, 162-63	Statement regarding Railway Minister's discussion with the President about post-strike situation
545.	21 August 1974	199-202	Demands for Supplementary Grants (Railways), 1974-75: Presentation of Statement
546.	22 August 1974	193, 195-96	Calling Attention to reported alarming increase in smuggling causing serious damage to national economy

1	2	3	4
547.	11 November 1974	223-24, 333-48	Adjournment Motion regarding alleged failure of Government to prevent assault by Central Police etc. on Satyagrahis at Patna
548.	15 November 1974	408-14	Calling Attention to reported entry of US Naval Task Force into Indian Ocean
549.	18 November 1974	211-63	Presidential Order on MISA (Laid on the Table)
550.	21 November 1974	209	Question of Privilege regarding Import Licences case
551.	22 November 1974	228-29	Question of Privilege regarding Import Licences case
552.	25 November 1974	209-33	Question of Privilege regarding Import Licences case
553.	26 November 1974	227-28	Question of Privilege regarding Import Licences case
554.	27 November 1974	212, 219	Question of Privilege regarding Import Licences case
555.	3 December 1974	202-06	Regarding Import Licence case
556.	4 December 1974	253-54	Statement regarding jute prices
557.	20 December 1974	246-53	Regarding Import Licence case
		1975	
558.	19 February 1975	214	Regarding discussion on incidents in Jama Masjid Area, Delhi
559.	20 February 1975	393-407	Discussion regarding jute workers' strike in West Bengal
560.	21 February 1975	217-21	Regarding discussion on conduct of Shri Tulmohan Ram, MP.
561.	24 February 1975	284-302	Motion of Thanks on President's Address
562.	12 March 1975	304-18	Budget (General), 1975-76: General Discussion

1	2	3	4
563.	24 March 1975	239-40	Arrest of CPI (M) and CITU leaders including MLAs' in Tripura (Matter under Rule 377)
564.	26 March 1975	395	Resolution regarding measures to remove economic and social injustices to women
565.	7 April 1975	238-65	Regarding Adjournment Motions (Query)
566.	8 April 1975	331-43	Motion regarding violent incident in Calcutta wherein Shri Jayaprakash Narain's car was attacked and Shri Samar Guha, MP, sustains injuries
567.	9 April 1975	215	Regarding Shri Morarji Desai's fast
568.	10 April 1975	229-31	Calling Attention to situation arising out of Shri Morarji Desai's decision to go on an indefinite fast
569.	11 April 1975	382	Half-an-hour discussion regarding Dowry Prohibition Act
570.	11 April 1975	303-18	Resolution regarding measures to remove economic and social injustices to women
571.	16 April 1975	209, 211-13, 215-16	Calling Attention to reported attempts to stop work in Bhilai Steel Plant
572.	18 April 1975	383-91	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1975-76
573.	23 April 1975	225-37, 310	The Constitution (Thirty-eighth Amendment) Bill
574.	25 April 1975	380-86	Resolution regarding measures to remove economic and social injustice to women
575.	25 April 1975	227-28	Business of the House
576.	7 May 1975	268-70, 294, 296, 309-11, 331, 353-70	Maintenance of Internal Security (Amendment) Bill
577.	8 May 1975	263, 265-67	Maintenance of Internal Security (Amendment) Bill

1	2	3	4
578.	9 May 1975	263	Question of Privilege regarding alleged forged letter ascribed to be from employees of Hindalco, read by Shri Janeshwar Mishra in the House
579.	9 May 1975	339-41	Motion regarding No-confidence in the Council of Ministers
580.	9 May 1975	299-306, 309-12, 319	Calling Attention to reported resignation of General Manager of Durgapur Steel Plant
581.	21 July 1975	28-29, 38-42	Motion regarding business to be taken up in the session and suspension of certain Rules of Procedure
582.	21 July 1975	110-28	Resolution regarding approval of Proclamation of Emergency
583.	25 July 1975	83-94, 162-64	Maintenance of Internal Security (Second Amendment) Bill
584.	30 July 1975	93	Banking Service Commission Bill
585.	31 July 1975	72-73, 154-78	Motion regarding New Programme for Economic Progress
586.	4 August 1975	168	Motion regarding New Programme for Economic Progress
587.	5 August 1975	11-20	Election Laws (Amendment) Bill
588.	5 August 1975	57-67	Public Financial Institutions Laws (Amendment) Bill
589.	7 August 1975	17-18, 35-78, 61, 82	The Constitution (Fortieth Amendment) Bill
590.	7 August 1975	115-16	Motion to pass the Bill, as amended
		1976	
591.	5 January 1976	41-43	Congratulations to Shri B.R. Bhagat on his election as Speaker
592.	6 January 1976	148	Statement regarding accident in the Chasnala Coal Mines, near Dhanbad
593.	6 January 1976	220-36	Motion regarding President's Address

1	2	3	4
594.	12 January 1976	168-72	Sales Production Employees (Conditions of Services) Bill
595.	21 January 1976	215-34	Resolution regarding Disapproval of Maintenance of Internal Security (Amendment) Ordinances
596.	21 January 1976	215-34	Maintenance of Internal Security (Amendment) Bill
597.	22 January 1976	202-08	Resolution regarding Disapproval of Maintenance of Internal Security (Amendment) Bill
598.	22 January 1976	202-08	Maintenance of Internal Security (Amendment) Bill
599.	27 January 1976	283-92, 327-29	Delhi Rent Control (Amendment) Bill
600.	27 January 1976	151, 153	Parliamentary Proceedings (Protection of Publication) Repeal Bill
601.	29 January 1976	168, 170, 172-73, 178, 193-96, 202-05, 209 215-16	Resolution regarding Disapproval of Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matter Ordinance and Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matter Bill
602.	30 January 1976	133	Business of the House
603.	3 February 1976	18-31, 77-96	Resolution regarding Disapproval of Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Ordinance
604.	3 February 1976	77-96	Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Bill
605.	4 February 1976	18-37, 50-87	Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Bill
606.	17 March 1976	210-13	Budget (Railway), 1976-77: General Discussion
607.	18 March 1976	191-208	Budget (General), 1976-77: General Discussion
608.	18 March 1976	156-57	Budget (Railway), 1976-77: General Discussion

1	2	3	4
609.	23 March 1976	157, 160	Budget (General), 1976-77: General Discussion
610.	31 March 1976	132-34	Life Insurance Corporation (Modification of Settlement) Bill
611.	5 April 1976	189-200	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1976-77
612.	8 April 1976	103	Demands for Grants (Ministry of External Affairs), 1976-77
613.	11 May 1976	230-34	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs), 1976-77
614.	12 May 1976	126-29	Resolution regarding increase in export of hides, skins and leather
615.	14 May 1976	139-45	Calling Attention to reported move by the U.K. Government to compel Indian nationals in U.K. to adopt British citizenship or to leave the country
616.	17 May 1976	79-84	Finance Bill, 1976-Motion to pass, as amended
617.	18 May 1976	120, 123, 127, 132, 137, 140-41	Tea (Amendment) Bill
618.	19 May 1976	39-51, 90	Additional Emoluments (Compulsory Deposit) Amendment Bill
619.	20 May 1976	55-62	Life Insurance Corporation (Modification of Settlement) Bill
620.	25 May 1976	36-49, 155	The Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Bill
621.	10 August 1976	183, 186-97, 209	Calling Attention to reported rise in prices of foodgrains, sugar and other essential commodities
622.	12 August 1976	196-200	Calling Attention to reported closure of jute mills and fall in price of raw jute

1	2	3	4
623.	13 August 1976	199-212	Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of the Maintenance of Internal Security (Amendment) Ordinance, 1976 and Maintenance of Internal Security (Second Amendment) Bill
624.	16 August 1976	279-88	Resolution regarding Disapproval of the Maintenance of Internal Security (Amendment) Ordinance, 1976
625.	17 August 1976	137-47	Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and other Maritime Zones Bill
626.	19 August 1976	181-89	Indian Iron and Steel Company (Acquisition of shares) Bill
627.	23 August 1976	151-53	Question of Privilege regarding news item published in 'Current' Weekly
628.	24 August 1976	154-66, 198-200	Burn Company and Indian Standard Wagon Company (Nationalisation) Bill and Braithwaite and Company (India) Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Bill
629.	25 August 1976	314-21	Half-an-hour discussion regarding payment of first instalment of impounded D.A.
630.	1 September 1976	11	Business of the House
631.	1 September 1976	14-15	The Constitution (Thirty-fourth Amendment) Bill
632.	1 September 1976	44-48	Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill
		1980	
633.	22 January 1980	11-13	Felicitations to the Speaker
634.	23 January 1980	30-31	Obituary references
635.	29 January 1980	132-139	Motion of Thanks on President's Address

1	2	3	4
636.	30 January 1980	90-91	Regarding Question of Privilege
637.	30 January 1980	119-21	Statement regarding incident of refusal of entry to Shri Romesh Chandra by British Government at London Airport
638.	1 February 1980	171	Motion regarding Election of Deputy Speaker
639.	1 February 1980	178-79	Felicitations to the Deputy Speaker
640.	2 February 1980	32-33	Reported proposal for reduction in Central Government Staff (Matter under Rule 377)
641.	11 March 1980	185	Regarding Motions for Adjournments etc.
642.	13 March 1980	306-13	Budget (General), 1980-81: General Discussion, Demands for Grants on Account (General), 1980-81, Demand for Supplementary Grants (General), 1979-80
643.	13 March 1980	387-91	Discussion regarding atrocities on Harijans and Adivasis
644.	14 March 1980	226, 229, 232	Budget (General), 1980-81: General Discussion
645.	14 March 1980	226, 229, 232	Demand for Grants on Account (General), 1980-81
646.	14 March 1980	226, 229, 232	Demand for Supplementary Grants (General), 1979-80
647.	14 March 1980	270-73	Finance Bill, 1980
648.	14 March 1980	296-302	Resolution regarding notification for increasing the Export Duty on Hessian cloth and Bags
649.	15 March 1980	7-8	Business of the House
650.	19 March 1980	237-40	Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property (Amendment) Bill
651.	20 March 1980	226, 239-40	Regarding Motions for Adjournments etc.
652.	20 March 1980	271-72	Motion regarding Third Report of Business Advisory Committee

1	2	3	4
653.	21 March 1980	368-69	Resolution regarding Centre-State relationship
654.	25 March 1980	191	Regarding Motions for Adjournments etc.
655.	25 March 1980	264-74	Resolution regarding Proclamation in relation to the States of Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh
656.	27 March 1980	314-23	Motion regarding steep rise in prices of essential commodities
657.	9 June 1980	269-71	Adjournment Motion regarding increase in price of certain petroleum products on the eve of session
658.	9 June 1980	311-12	Reported relay hunger strike by members of All India Apprentices Union (Matter under Rule 377)
659.	9 June 1980	356-57, 364-76	Resolution regarding continuance of Proclamation in respect of Assam
660.	10 June 1980	228	Regarding Adjournment Motion
661.	10 June 1980	258-60	Calling Attention to reported burning of some Harijans in Almora Distt., U.P.
662.	10 June 1980	304	Reported delay in construction of Patna-Hajipur Ganga Bridge in Bihar (Matter under Rule 377)
663.	10 June 1980	345, 348	Resolution regarding continuance of Proclamation in respect of Assam
664.	18 June 1980	265, 267-68	Reported token strike by resident doctors in major hospitals in Delhi
665.	23 June 1980	8-9	Obituary reference: Death of Shri Sanjay Gandhi, MP.
666.	25 June 1980	8-9	Death of Shri V.V. Giri, former President of India

1	2	3	4
667.	26 June 1980	754-56	Regarding Motion for Adjournment, Calling Attention etc.
668.	26 June 1980	769-70, 770-73	Essential Services Maintenance (Assam) Bill
669.	26 June 1980	871-72	Budget (General), 1980-81: General Discussion
670.	27 June 1980	300-16	Budget (General)—General Discussion
671.	2 July 1980	198-201	Calling Attention to reported Chinese offer to settle border problem on the basis of present line of actual control
672.	8 July 1980	274-75	Adjournment Motion regarding Government's failure to protect life and honour of men and women of weaker sections
673.	8 July 1980	378-91	Demands for Grants (General)—Ministry of External Affairs, 1980-81
674.	14 July 1980	7-9	Obituary reference: Death of Shri Denen Bhattacharya, MP.
675.	16 July 1980	331-42	Half-an-hour discussion regarding delay in declaration of results of Assembly elections in Bihar
676.	17 July 1980	327-37	Demand for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1980-81
677.	7 August 1980	357-61	Motion regarding conduct of Minister of Energy and Coal
678.	11 August 1980	396-401	Dock-workers (Regulation of Employment) Amendment Bill
679.	17 November 1980	323-24	Regarding Motions for Adjournment
680.	17 November 1980	380-89	Calling Attention to constitutional stalemate in Assam on the issue of foreigners
681.	28 November 1980	290, 298, 308, 317-18	Business of the House

1	2	3	4
682.	3 December 1980	393-404	Motion regarding situation arising out of recent communal riots
683.	5 December 1980	297-396	Calling Attention to reported public speech of Shri Morarji Desai alleging that USSR had instigated him to attack Pakistan
684.	8 December 1980	328-33	Calling Attention to closure of Jawaharlal Nehru University
685.	8 December 1980	355-60, 363-64, 366	Maruti Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Bill
686.	8 December 1980	427-35, 444	Jute Companies (Nationalisation) Bill
687.	12 December 1980	297-98, 300	Regarding Question of Privilege
688.	15 December 1980	481	National Security Bill
689.	16 December 1980	507	National Security Bill
690.	16 December 1980	578-79, 597-601	Motion to pass the National Security Bill
691.	17 December 1980	259	Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of Maruti Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Ordinance, 1980 and Maruti Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertaking) Bill
692.	18 December 1980	267-77	Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of Maruti Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Ordinance, 1980 and Maruti Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertaking) Bill
693.	18 December 1980	339-79	Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of Maruti Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Ordinance, 1980 and Maruti Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertaking) Bill

1	2	3	4
694.	18 December 1980	439-44	Statutory Resolution regarding Bird and Company Limited and (Transfer of Undertakings and other Properties) Ordinance and Bird and Company Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings and other Properties) Bill
695.	23 December 1980	73-74	Non-implementation of assurances given to Jawans of the Central Industrial Security Force in 1979 (Under Rule 377)
		1981	
696.	17 February 1981	293	Regarding Adjournment Motion
697.	17 February 1981	300-313	Calling Attention to rise in price of essential commodities
698.	19 February 1981	463	Regarding Question of privilege
699.	20 February 1981	276	Calling attention to trapping of miners in the Bhadua Coal mines in Giridih district of Bihar
700.	23 February 1981	340-46	Life Insurance Corporation (Amendment) Bill
701.	25 February 1981	368-78	Motion of thanks on President's Address
702.	28 February 1981	9	Calling attention to reported collision of a Pushpak aircraft and an Indian Air Force helicopter
703.	28 February 1981	12-14	Business of the House
704.	2 March 1981	280-81	Regarding Calling Attention etc.
705.	3 March 1981	291-92	Regarding Supply of briefs to members by Ministries
706.	5 March 1981	295-314, 373-74	Statutory Resolution regarding Life Insurance Corporation (Amendment) Ordinance, 1981
707.	5 March 1981	313-14, 373-74	Life Insurance Corporation (Amendment) Bill
708.	6 March 1981	315-25	Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of Life Insurance Corporation (Amendment) Ordinance, 1981 and Life Insurance Corporation (Amendment) Bill

1	2	3	4
709.	9 March 1981	296-304	Regarding Calling Attention etc.
710.	11 March 1981	235	Regarding Adjournment Motion etc.
711.	11 March 1981	341-59	Budget (General), 1981-82: General Discussion
712.	17 March 1981	334-38	Regarding Adjournment Motions etc.
713.	18 March 1981	452-59	Motion regarding situation arising out of agitation and demonstrations regarding reservation of jobs for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
714.	25 March 1981	279-88	Regarding Adjournment Motion
715.	26 March 1981	252-61	Calling Attention to increase in population
716.	26 March 1981	265-66	Reported march of farmers and agricultural labourers from Red-Fort to Boat Club for redressal of their grievances (Matter under Rule 377)
717.	1 April 1981	284-310	Adjournment Motion regarding reported constitutional crisis in Assam
718.	2 April 1981	227	Regarding Calling Attention notices
719.	6 April 1981	284-94	Regarding Adjournment Motion
720.	6 April 1981	295-99, 310-14	Question of Privilege regarding assault on Shri Bhogendra Jha by P.A.C. at Ghaziabad, UP
721.	9 April 1981	274-84	Demand for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1981-82
722.	15 April 1981	496-506	Regarding Adjournment Motion etc.
723.	15 April 1981	676-84	Half-an-hour discussion regarding agreement with CARE Inc.
724.	22 April 1981	294-315	Regarding Adjournment Motion etc.
725.	4 May 1981	291-92	Regarding Motions for Adjournment
726.	4 May 1981	352-53	Industrial unrest in Bangalore based public sector undertakings (Matter under Rule 377)

1	2	3	4
727.	6 May 1981	304-05	Regarding Adjournment Motion etc.
728.	8 May 1981	274-79	Calling Attention to situation arising out of reported lockout by public sector undertakings in Bangalore
729.	8 May 1981	481-91	Motion of No-confidence in the Council of Ministers
730.	19 August 1981	355-58	Committee of Privileges: First Report
731.	27 August 1981	260-62, 266-67, 270-71	Regarding Adjournment Motion etc.
732.	28 August 1981	258-59	Question of Privilege regarding alleged censoring of mail and tapping of telephones of Members of Parliament
733.	28 August 1981	297	Business of the House
734.	31 August 1981	330-31	Regarding Adjournment Motion
735.	31 August 1981	376-88, 413-14	Anti-apartheid (United Nations Convention) Bill
736.	3 September 1981	448-62, 470	Motion regarding current price situation
737.	15 September 1981	372-84	Resolution regarding disapproval of Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance
738.	18 September 1981	357-63	Assam State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Bill, as passed by Rajya Sabha
739.	23 November 1981	328, 330-32	Adjournment Motion regarding agreement for IMF loan
740.	27 November 1981	309-10	Business of the House
741.	2 December 1981	466-80	Motion regarding India's extended arrangement with the International Monetary Fund
742.	10 December 1981	576-77	Proposed introduction of electronic computer technology in the newspaper industry (Matter under Rule 377)

1	2	3	4
743.	10 December 1981	637-51	Motion regarding international situation and policy of Government of India in relation thereto
744.	17 December 1981	299, 301	Alleged assault by police on Shri Satyanarayan Jatiya, MP
745.	17 December 1981	347-55	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of Proclamation in relation to the state of Kerala and Supplementary Demands for Grants (Kerala), 1981-82
746.	22 December 1981	402-11	Aligarh Muslim University (Third Amendment) Bill
747.	22 December 1981	307, 308	Question of Privilege
		1982	
748.	11 March 1982	378-93	Budget (General), 1982-83: General Discussion
749.	12 April 1982	352-60	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Commerce), 1982-83
750.	23 April 1982	412-21, 433-36	Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill
751.	30 April 1982	631-33	Assam State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Bill
752.	30 April 1982	636-41	Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Amendment Bill
753.	13 July 1982	632-34	Committee of Privileges-Second Report
754.	14 July 1982	484-94	Calling attention to closure of Jute Mills in West Bengal
755.	15 July 1982	240-41	Regarding Question of Privilege
756.	22 July 1982	319-33	Discussion regarding Prime Minister's Statement on situation in Lebanon
757.	28 July 1982	487-96	Discussion on the Statement of Minister of Petroleum, Chemicals and Fertilisers regarding transaction relating to purchase of H.S.D. from Messer Kuo Oil

1	2	3	4
758.	5 August 1982	329-44	Statutory Resolution regarding continuance in force of Proclamation in respect of State of Assam, Assam Budget, 1982-83: General Discussion, Demands for Grants (Assam), 1982-83 and Statutory Resolution regarding notification under Essential Services Maintenance (Assam) Act
759.	9 August 1982	441-63	Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill
760.	16 August 1982	121-33	Motion regarding No-confidence in Council of Ministers
761.	11 October 1982	357-67	International Monetary Fund and Bank (Amendment) Bill
762.	21 October 1982	9	Death of Shri Mukunda Mandal
763.	2 November 1982	346	Motion regarding Sixth Five Year Plan
764.	3 November 1982	408-20	Motion regarding Sixth Five Year Plan
		1983	
765.	21 February 1983	468-86	Motion regarding Assam
766.	3 March 1983	315	Statement regarding incident in Assam
767.	14 March 1983	515-23	Discussion regarding incidents in Assam
768.	16 March 1983	357-73	Budget (General), 1983-84: General Discussion
769.	17 March 1983	321-48	Calling Attention to reported plight of tobacco growers due to steep fall in price of tobacco
770.	22 March 1983	486-97	Motion regarding Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-aligned countries
771.	4 April 1983	428-43	Demands for Grants (General)—Ministry of Defence, 1983-84

1	2	3	4
772.	27 April 1983	455-62	Adjournment Motion regarding failure of Government to ensure that religious places like Golden Temple, Amritsar, etc. are not used in a manner to aggravate law and order situation
773.	3 May 1983	354-61	Central Industrial Security Force (Amendment) Bill
774.	26 July 1983	905-17	Adjournment Motion regarding deteriorating situation in Punjab arising out of extremists' activities and failure of Government to settle the issues
775.	28 July 1983	477-85	National Oilseeds and Vegetable Oils Development Board Bill
776.	28 July 1983	477-85	Vegetable Oils Cess Bill
777.	4 August 1983	342-51	Discussion on Statement of Minister of External Affairs regarding his recent visit to Sri Lanka
778.	8 August 1983	429-41	Jute Manufactures Cess Bill and Jute Manufactures Development Council Bill
779.	18 August 1983	435-40	Discussion on the Statement made by Prime Minister on 12 August 1983 on situation in Sri Lanka
780.	15 November 1983	445-48	Punjab Disturbed Areas Bill
781.	15 November 1983	490-502	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of Proclamation in relation to the State of Punjab
782.	17 November 1983	357-65	Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of Punjab Areas Ordinance, 1983, Punjab Disturbed Areas Bill, Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of Chandigarh Disturbed Areas Ordinance, 1983, Chandigarh Disturbed Areas Bill, Statutory

1	2	3	4
			Resolution regarding Disapproval of Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Ordinance, 1983 and Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Bill
783.	6 December 1983	425-33	Discussion regarding present international situation and the policy of the Government of India in relation thereto
784.	7 December 1983	485-96	Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of Textile Undertakings (Taking over of Management) Ordinance, 1983 and Textile Undertakings (Taking over of Management) Bill
		1984	
785.	1 March 1984	478-89	Motion of Thanks on President's Address
786.	3 March 1984	146-54	Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of Incheck Tyres Limited and National Rubber Manufacturers Limited (Nationalisation) Ordinance, 1984 and Incheck Tyres Limited and National Rubber Manufacturers Limited (Nationalisation) Bill
787.	8 March 1984	477-93	Discussion regarding situation arising out of jute workers' strike
788.	13 March 1984	381-93	Budget (General), 1984-85: General Discussion
789.	22 March 1984	438-47	Discussion regarding indefinite strike by port and dock workers at major ports from midnight of 15/16 March 1984
790.	23 March 1984	336-48	Demands for Grants (General)—Ministry of Defence, 1984-85
791.	3 April 1984	443-46	Regarding death of Shri V.N. Tewary, MP (Rajya Sabha)

1	2	3	4
792.	4 April 1984	470-82	Discussion regarding Statement made by the Minister of Home Affairs regarding Akalis' demands concerning article 25 of the Constitution and incidental matter
793.	18 April 1984	492-502	Discussion regarding Statement made by the Minister of Home Affairs regarding burning of railway stations in Punjab and shooting of some persons at Amritsar
794.	23 April 1984	238-240	National Security (Amendment) Bill
795.	24 April 1984	369-79	Calling Attention to reported engagement of Scheduled Castes children as bonded labour and brutal treatment meted out to them with particular reference to happenings in the carpet manufacturing units of Mirzapur District of Uttar Pradesh
796.	9 May 1984	425-46	Discussion regarding international situation and policy of Government of India in relation thereto
797.	25 July 1984	268-81	Discussion regarding White Paper on Punjab agitation
798.	31 July 1984	377-86	Discussion regarding recent development in Jammu and Kashmir
799.	2 August 1984	397-402	Demands for Grants (Pondicherry), 1984-85
800.	6 August 1984	422-25	National Security (Second Amendment) Bill
801.	6 August 1984	449-54	Terrorist Affected Areas (Special Courts) Bill
802.	16 August 1984	494	Terrorist Affected Areas (Special Courts) Bill
803.	16 August 1984	312-323	Calling Attention to unabated rise in prices of essential commodities and steps taken by the Government

1	2	3	4
804.	16 August 1984	530	Motion to Pass—the Terrorist Affected Areas (Special Courts) Bill
805.	21 August 1984	461-70	Motion regarding disapproval of action of Governor of Andhra Pradesh in dismissing the Ministry headed by Shri N.T. Rama Rao
806.	23 August 1984	399-409	The Constitution (Fiftieth Amendment) Bill
807.	23 August 1984	575-81	The Constitution (Fifty-second Amendment) Bill
		1985	
808.	20 March 1985	225-26	Demands for Grants (Railways), 1985-86
809.	26 March 1985	222-31	Resolution regarding continuance of Proclamation in respect of Punjab and Demands for Grants on Account (Punjab)
810.	9 April 1985	291-99	Demands for Grants (Ministry of External Affairs), 1985-86
811.	29 April 1985	240-45	Demands for Grants (General) (Ministry of Commerce and Supply), 1985-86
812.	7 May 1985	586-601	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Labour), 1985-86
813.	9 May 1985	307-21	Finance Bill, 1985
814.	23 July 1985	234-38, 248-49	Regarding Adjournment Motion on Proclaiming Emergency
815.	24 July 1985	231-35	Question of Privilege
816.	25 July 1985	198-205	Demands for Grants (Punjab), 1985-86
817.	26 July 1985	291-300	Calling Attention to recent fall in prices of agricultural produce and steps taken by Government to ensure remunerative prices to agriculturists

1	2	3	4
818.	30 July 1985	304	Discussion regarding New Textile Policy
819.	31 July 1985	191-93	Death of Shri Lalit Maken
820.	2 August 1985	329-32	Discussion regarding Steep rise in prices
821.	5 August 1985	390	Criminal Law Amendment (Amending) Bill
822.	12 August 1985	423	Essential Services Maintenance (Amendment) Bill
823.	13 August 1985	254	Need to instruct Jute Corporation of India to buy adequate supplies of fibre to build buffer stocks to safeguard the interests of jute growers (Matter under Rule 377)
824.	19 August 1985	522	Discussion regarding racial riots in South Africa affecting the people of Indian Origin
825.	21 August 1985	6-7	Obituary reference: Death of Sant Harchand Singh Longowal
826.	18 November 1985	354	Citizenship (Amendment) Bill
827.	20 November 1985	269-77	Citizenship (Amendment) Bill
828.	21 November 1985	358-63	Discussion regarding crash in prices of agricultural commodities
829.	4 December 1985	289-96	Statutory Resolution regarding disapproval of Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Ordinance, 1985 and Payment of Bonus (Second Amendment) Ordinance, 1985
830.	4 December 1985	289-96	Payment of Bonus (Second Amendment) Bill
831.	9 December 1985	395	Motion regarding present international situation and policy of Government of India in relation thereto

1	2	3	4
832.	16 December 1985	408-18	Central Excise Tariff Bill, Additional Duties of Excise (Textiles and Textile Articles) Amendment Bill and Additional Duties of Excise (Goods of Special Importance) Amendment Bill
		1986	
833.	21 February 1986	274-76	Regarding Adjournment Motion
834.	21 February 1986	303	Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill
835.	21 February 1986	434-43	Adjournment Motion regarding steep rise in prices of fertilizers and petroleum products
836.	25 February 1986	325-33	Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill
837.	3 March 1986	418-24	Statutory Resolution regarding disapproval of the Ravi and Beas Water Tribunal Ordinance, 1986
838.	7 March 1986	298-302	Discussion regarding situation in Nicaragua
839.	23 March 1986	395-404	Demands for Grants (General)—Ministry of External Affairs, 1986-87
840.	31 March 1986	418-24	Inter-State Disputes (Amendment) Bill
841.	16 April 1986	379-87	Discussion regarding recent bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi by US aircraft
842.	25 April 1986	343-54	Finance Bill, 1986
843.	30 April 1986	352-60	Discussion regarding development in Punjab
844.	5 May 1986	604	Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill
845.	22 July 1986	343-53	Discussion regarding communal situation in various parts of the country

1	2	3	4
846.	28 July 1986	357-65	Discussion regarding situation in Punjab
847.	29 July 1986	441-48	Commissions of Inquiry (Amendment) Bill
848.	29 July 1986	411-48	Statutory Resolution regarding disapproval of the Commissions of Inquiry (Amendment) Ordinance
849.	5 August 1986	278-79	Calling Attention to Central Government's reported decision to set up a Joint Venture Company
850.	5 August 1986	340-46	Constitution (Fifty-third Amendment) Bill and State of Mizoram Bill
851.	7 August 1986	395-98	Motion regarding present situation in South Africa
852.	20 August 1986	30-36, 69	National Security Guard Bill
853.	21 August 1986	53-60	Taxation Law (Amendment and Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill
854.	4 November 1986	341-46, 371	Adjournment Motion regarding security lapses at Rajghat on 2 October, 1986
855.	6 November 1986	385-94	Discussion regarding serious situation arising out of reported explosion of a nuclear device by Pakistan and the supply of SWACS and other sophisticated arms by USA to Pakistan
856.	7 November 1986	313-14	Calling Attention to agitation by Junior Engineers (Telecommunications)
857.	11 November 1986	305-09	Citizenship (Amendment) Bill
858.	12 November 1986	259-65	Delhi Fire Prevention and Fire Safety Bill
859.	18 November 1986	248-57	Discussion regarding recent spurt in terrorist activities in Punjab and other parts of the country

1	2	3	4
860.	21 November 1986	259-63	Calling Attention to reported poor performance of India at the export front, thereby widening the trade deficit
861.	21 November 1986	293	Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Bill by Shri Indrajit Gupta
862.	27 November 1986	255-57	Atomic Energy (Amendment) Bill
863.	1 December 1986	306-10	Calling Attention to increasing atrocities on women
864.	1 December 1986	448-56	Discussion on Statement made by Minister of Home Affairs regarding situation arising out of killings by terrorists in Punjab
865.	8 December 1986	55-61	The Constitution (Fifty-fifth Amendment) Bill
866.	8 December 1986	55-61	State of Arunachal Pradesh Bill
867.	9 December 1986	122	Delhi Apartment Ownership Bill, 1986—Consideration of Rajya Sabha Amendment
		1987	
868.	12 March 1987	511-27	Budget (General), 1987-88: General Discussion and Demands for Excess Grants (General), 1984-85
869.	13 March 1987	9-15	Non-payment of wages to Bombay textile workers
870.	5 April 1987	361	Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Bill (as passed by Rajya Sabha)
871.	6 April 1987	472	Discussion on Statement of Prime Minister regarding appointment of a Supreme Court Judge to enquire into issues connected with Utilisation Fairfax Group, USA
872.	15 April 1987	4	Motion under Rule 388 for suspension of Question Hour

1	2	3	4
873.	15 April 1987	701-11	Resolution regarding removal of Speaker from office
874.	16 April 1987	407-15	Discussion regarding inquiry ordered by the former Minister of Defence into payment of commission by the supplier to an Indian agent in defence deal
875.	20 April 1987	55-64	Discussion regarding reported announcement on the Swedish State Radio concerning the acquisition of guns by the Indian Army from Bofors of Sweden
876.	22 April 1987	448-55	Demands for Grants (Ministry of External Affairs), 1987-88
877.	24 April 1987	213-22	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1987-88
878.	30 April 1987	346	Business of the House
879.	6 May 1987	307-11	Jute Packaging Material (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Bill (as passed by Rajya Sabha)
880.	31 July 1987	254-59	National Security (Amendment) Bill
881.	31 July 1987	284-89	Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill (as passed by Rajya Sabha)
882.	3 August 1987	392-94, 471-88	Motion regarding appointment of a Joint Committee to enquire into the issues arising from the report of Swedish National Audit Bureau on the Bofors contract
883.	10 August 1987	436-45	Discussion regarding drought situation in the country
884.	11 August 1987	388-96	Calling Attention to closure and lock out in large number of Jute Mills in West Bengal
885.	20 August 1987	401-15	Discussion regarding communal disturbances in various parts of the country

1	2	3	4
886.	26 August 1987	582-99	Discussion regarding announcement by the Chief Public Prosecutor of Sweden regarding inquiry into the alleged bribes paid by Bofors in the Howitzer deal
887.	27 August 1987	393-99	Legal Services Authorities Bill
888.	6 November 1987	216-17	Motion regarding report of the Joint Committee on Bofors contract
889.	9 November 1987	455-76	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of continuance in force of Presidential Proclamation in respect of Punjab
890.	10 November 1987	468-77	Discussion on Statement by the Prime Minister regarding situation in Sri Lanka
891.	18 November 1987	344-53	Discussion regarding reported negotiation between the Government of India and the Union Carbide Corporation for out-of-court settlement
892.	27 November 1987	3-4	Obituary references: Death of Shri Sheo Narain, Shri Girdhari Lal Dogra, Shri Narain Din, Shri Ram Avtar Sharma
893.	7 December 1987	344	Petition regarding uniformity in wages, payment of Provident Fund arrears and provision of house sites to bidi workers
894.	8 December 1987	462-70	Discussion regarding recent deliberations in US Congress on South Asia
895.	14 December 1987	93-98	Question of Privilege against H.K.L. Bhagat, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Minister of Food and Civil Supplies for his allegedly intimidating Shri Ram Dhan and Shri Raj Kumar and suppressing their freedom of speech through whip issued to them.

1	2	3	4
896.	14 December 1987	154-68	Discussion regarding Report of Inquiry into events and circumstances leading to arrangements entered into with Fairfax Group Inc.
		1988	
897.	1 March 1988	436-49	Motion of Thanks on President's Address
898.	7 March 1988	848-62	Discussion regarding Statement made by Minister regarding dissolution of Punjab Legislative Assembly
899.	17 March 1988	289-301	Budget (General), 1988-89: General Discussion
900.	22 March 1988	328-33	Statutory Resolution regarding disapproval of Major Port Trusts (Amendment) Ordinance 1988 and Major Port Trust (Amendment) Bill
901.	23 March 1988	400-12	The Constitution (Fifty-ninth Amendment) Bill
902.	26 March 1988	306-09	Motion regarding extension of time for presentation of report of the Joint Committee to enquire into Bofors contract
903.	7 April 1988	485-502	Discussion regarding mass killings of innocent people and rocket attack on Para-Military camp by terrorists in Punjab
904.	20 April 1988	383-99	Demands for Grants (Ministry of External Affairs), 1988-89
905.	22 April 1988	306-19	Demands for Grants (Ministry of External Affairs), 1988-89
906.	4 May 1988	589-99	Discussion regarding report of the Joint Committee to enquire into Bofors Contract
907.	11 May 1988	260-66	Special Protection Group Bill

1	2	3	4
908.	13 May 1988	325-29	Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (Determination of Conditions of Service of Employees) Bill
909.	27 July 1988	232-38	Statutory Resolution regarding Disapproval of National Security (Amendment) Ordinance
910.	28 July 1988	291-95	Alock Ashdown Company Limited (Acquisition of Undertaking) Amendment Bill
911.	1 August 1988	352-54	Discussion regarding incidence of Gastro-enteritis/Cholera in Union Territory of Delhi
912.	5 August 1988	311	Business of the House
913.	8 August 1988	314-15	Arms (Amendment) Bill
914.	8 August 1988	314-15	Statutory Resolution regarding disapproval of Arms (Amendment) Ordinance, 1988
915.	8 August 1988	373-82	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of the Proclamation in relation to the State of Nagaland
916.	9 August 1988	499-505	Statutory Resolution regarding disapproval of Arms (Amendment) Ordinance, 1988 and Arms (Amendment) Bill
917.	10 August 1988	302-11	Statutory Resolution regarding disapproval of Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Ordinance, 1988
918.	10 August 1988	302-11	Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Bill
919.	11 August 1988	420	Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Bill
920.	11 August 1988	424-33	Discussion regarding accident of 26 DN Bangalore-Trivandrum Express between Sasthankotta and Perimad stations of Southern Railway

1	2	3	4
921.	17 August 1988	238-44	National Security (Amendment) Bill
922.	18 August 1988	304-12	Demands for Grants (Punjab), 1988-89
923.	2 November 1988	245-52	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of President's Proclamation in relation to the State of Mizoram
924.	16 November 1988	446-56	Discussion regarding commission reported to have been paid by M/s Bofors in the Howitzer Gun Deal
925.	22 November 1988	424-33	Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (Amendment) Bill
926.	25 November 1988	290-94	Discussion regarding rise in prices of essential commodities
927.	30 November 1988	577-82	Adjournment Motion regarding serious situation arising out of recent accidents involving Indian Airlines Aircraft
928.	1 December 1988	454-60	Banking Public Financial Institutions and Negotiable Instrument Laws (Amendment) Bill
929.	15 December 1988	22-36	The Constitution (Sixty-second Amendment) Bill
930.	15 December 1988	22-36	Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill
931.	16 December 1988	188-90	Discussion regarding damage due to cyclone in the States of West Bengal, Orissa and Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands
		1989	
932.	19 December 1989	10-11	Felicitations to the Speaker
933.	21 December 1989	75-84	Motion of Confidence in Council of Ministers
934.	22 December 1989	163-64	Resolution regarding conversion of narrow gauge railway lines into broad gauge in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra

1	2	3	4
935.	29 December 1989	257-61	The Constitution (Sixty-third Amendment) Bill—Motion to consider
		1990	
936.	13 March 1990	349-60	Motion under Rule 342: Situation in Jammu and Kashmir
937.	19 March 1990	481-83	Felicitations to the Deputy Speaker
938.	22 March 1990	486-93	Discussion under Rule 193, incidence in Nizamuddin Area
939.	26 March 1990	391-92	Resolution regarding approval of First Report of Railway Convention Committee, 1989, Budget (Railway), 1990-91: General Discussion, Demands for Grants (Railways), 1990-91 and Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways), 1989-90
940.	28 March 1990	452-63	Budget (General), 1990-91: General Discussion, Demands for Grants on Account (General), 1990-91 and Supplementary Demands for Grants (General), 1989-90
941.	29 March 1990	541-45	Commissions of Inquiry (Amendment)Bill
942.	4 April 1990	1069-78	Demands for Grants (General) (Ministry of External Affairs), 1990-91
943.	5 April 1990	541-45	The Constitution (Sixty-fifth Amendment) Bill
944.	10 April 1990	464-68	Demands for Grants (General) (Ministry of Defence), 1990-91
945.	15 May 1990	408-16	Demands for Grants (General) (Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Welfare), 1990-91
946.	16 August 1990	987-93	Calling Attention to situation arising out of the agitation by employees of All India Institute of Medical Sciences

1	2	3	4
947.	5 September 1990	355-62	Demands for Grants (Punjab), 1990-91
948.	6 September 1990	469-81	Discussion under Rule 193, Decisions on Mandal Commission Report and measures for promotion of employment for youth in addition to reservations for socially and educationally backward classes
949.	1 October 1990	56-62	The Constitution (Seventy-fifth Amendment) Bill
950.	4 October 1990	149-60	Adjournment Motion regarding police atrocities in dealing with student's agitation against Government's decision on Mandal Commission Report and resort to self immolation by students against the decision
951.	27 December 1990	700-10	Motion for Adjournment regarding communal situation in the country and Government's failure to curb communal forces
		1991	
952.	3 January 1991	480-82	Regarding alleged threat of arrest of the Speaker, Lok Sabha by Shri Subramaniam Swamy, a Union Minister
953.	9 January 1991	527-31	Adjournment Motion regarding failure of Government to uphold provisions of Tenth Schedule of the Constitution
954.	22 February 1991	522-30	Adjournment Motion regarding failure of Government to take timely decision about stoppage of refuelling of U.S. planes and proper initiatives in regard of Gulf War compatible with the Pronounced National Foreign Policy

1	2	3	4
955.	4 March 1991	829-31	Interim Budget (General), 1991-92
956.	6 March 1991	795-801	Constitutional crisis in the country
957.	12 March 1991	74-76	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of continuance in force of Proclamation in respect of Punjab
958.	10 July 1991	17-20	Felicitations to the Speaker
959.	11 July 1991	36-40	Resolution regarding demise of Rajiv Gandhi and obituary references
960.	15 July 1991	220-237	Motion of Confidence in the Council of Ministers
961.	31 July 1991	271-296	Budget (General): General Discussion
962.	26 August 1991	498-508	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of continuance in force of Proclamation in respect of Jammu and Kashmir
963.	5 September 1991	397-412	Demands for Grants (General): Ministry of Defence
964.	9 September 1991	727-738	Places of Worship (Special Provision) Bill
965.	18 September 1991	18-25	Statutory Resolution regarding continuance of Proclamation by President in relation to the State of Punjab
966.	18 September 1991	120-132	Motion regarding International situation
967.	25 November 1991	710-716	Demands for Grants (Punjab), 1991-92
968.	3 December 1991	578-587	Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Amendment Bill
969.	10 December 1991	622-637	Discussion under Rule 193: Deterioration in law and order situation in various parts of the country

1	2	3	4
		1992	
970.	3 March 1992	527-534	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of Proclamation in relation to the State of Manipur and Motion regarding revocation of Proclamation in relation to the State of Manipur
971.	9 March 1992	458-69	Motion of Thanks on the President's Address
972.	1 April 1992	687-94	Discussion under Rule 193: Bofors gun deal investigation
973.	20 April 1992	585-594	Demands for Grants (General) (Ministry of External Affairs), 1992-93
974.	16 July 1992	472-488	Motion of No-confidence in the Council of Ministers
975.	17 July 1992	592-595	Resolution regarding compensation to victims of Bhopal Gas Disaster
976.	29 July 1992	591-595	Discussion under Rule 193: regarding Ram Janma Bhoomi Babri Masjid Dispute
977.	4 August 1992	579-589, 606-628	Discussion under Rule 193: Scam involving operations in Government securities running into thousands of crore of rupees
978.	20 August 1992	76-78	Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill
979.	25 November 1992	558-570	Discussion under Rule 193: Situation affecting agriculture and farmers' interests due to increase in prices of fertilizers and wheat import
980.	3 December 1992	600-609	Discussion under Rule 193: Situation at Ayodhya

1	2	3	4
981.	17 December 1992	548-559	Motion of No-confidence in the Council of Ministers
982.	22 December 1992	674-680	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of Proclamations in relation to the States of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan
		1993	
983.	23 February 1993	682-685	Discussion under Rule 193: Ban on Political Rallies at Boat Club
984.	25 February 1993	464-477	Statutory Resolution regarding continuance of Proclamation in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir
985.	3 March 1993	549-565	Motion of Thanks on the President's Address
986.	5 May 1993	432-441	Finance Bill, 1993
987.	13 May 1993	360-364	Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill
988.	28 July 1993	493-512	Motion of No-confidence in the Council of Ministers
989.	30 July 1993	661	State of Uttarakhand Bill
990.	17 August 1993		Demands for Grants (Jammu and Kashmir Budget), 1993-94
991.	2 December 1993	17-18	Obituary references
992.	14 December 1993	366	Statutory Resolution regarding disapproval of Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Ordinance and Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill (as passed by Rajya Sabha)
993.	17 December 1993	385-400	Clarifications sought by hon. members on the Statement made by Minister of Commerce regarding Uruguay Round of Talks

1	2	3	4
994.	30 December 1993	13	Discussion under Rule 193 regarding Report of Joint Committee to Enquire into irregularities in Securities and Banking Transactions
		1994	
995.	24 February 1994	489-90, 507-09	Calling Attention to matter of urgent public importance regarding recent mine disaster at the New Kenda Colliery of the Eastern Coalfields Ltd.
996.	3 March 1994	569-84	Motion of Thanks on the President's Address
997.	7 March 1994	555	Motion of Thanks on the President's Address
998.	18 April 1994	7	Obituary references
999.	21 April 1994	8-9	Obituary references
1000.	25 April 1994	639-40	Budget (General), 1994-95: General Discussion
1001.	5 May 1994	435-46	Finance Bill, 1994
1002.	13 June 1994	8-9	Obituary references
1003.	25 July 1994	9-11	Obituary references
1004.	27 July 1994	28-31, 582, 588, 593	Regarding Action Taken Report on the recommendations of Joint Parliamentary Committee on irregularities in Securities and Banking Transactions
1005.	2 August 1994	581-88, 590, 615-16	Regarding Action Taken Report on the recommendations of Joint Parliamentary Committee on irregularities in Securities and Banking Transactions
1006.	22 August 1994	629-31	Regarding issuance of identity cards to voters
1007.	23 August 1994	347-350, 365, 368, 370	Acute crisis in wagon industry

1	2	3	4
1008.	24 August 1994	498-501	Threat to security of India in view of reported possession of nuclear bomb by Pakistan
1009.	25 August 1994	427-29	Constitution (Eighty-fifth Amendment) Bill
1010.	26 August 1994	340-42	Regarding Bofors gun deal
1011.	26 August 1994	433-35	Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University Bill
1012.	8 December 1994	230	Regarding accident involving former President of India, Giani Zail Singh
1013.	8 December 1994	253-55	Regarding deaths of several persons due to a stampede in Nagpur as a result of lathi charge by police on tribal demonstrators
1014.	13 December 1994	215, 217, 222	Regarding laying on the table of Gyan Prakash Committee's report on sugar import
1015.	14 December 1994	199-200	Laying on the table of Gyan Prakash Committee's report on import of sugar
1016.	15 December 1994	216-19, 225	Laying on the table of Gyan Prakash Committee's report on import of sugar
1017.	19 December 1994	252, 259, 261-62, 264-65	Statement by Minister regarding Gyan Prakash Committee
1018.	20 December 1994	252-54	Regarding issuance of photo identity cards to voters
		1995	
1019.	13 February 1995	17-19	Obituary references
1020.	14 February 1995	228	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of continuance in forces of Proclamation in respect of Jammu and Kashmir
1021.	24 April 1995	8-9	Obituary references

1	2	3	4
1022.	26 April 1995	204-12	Motion of Thanks on the President's Address
1023.	9 May 1995	265-74	Demands for Grants (Ministry of Defence), 1995-96, General Budget
1024.	15 May 1995	381-88	Adjournment Motion regarding situation arising out of burning down of Charar-e-Sharief in Kashmir
1025.	23 May 1995	265-72	Finance Bill, 1995
1026.	3 June 1995	60-61	Political situation in Uttar Pradesh
1027.	23 June 1995	12-20	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of continuance in force of the Proclamation in respect of Jammu and Kashmir
1028.	31 July 1995	7-8	Obituary references
1029.	3 August 1995	226-31	Problem faced by major public sector undertaking
1030.	22 August 1995	440-46	Demands for Grants (Jammu and Kashmir Budget), 1995-96
1031.	26 August 1995	65	Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Bill (Application of Sixth Schedule to the State of Assam) (as passed by Rajya Sabha)
1032.	27 November 1995	13	Obituary references
		1996	
1033.	23 May 1996	12-13	Felicitations to Speaker
1034.	28 May 1996	26-33	Motion of Confidence in the Council of Ministers
1035.	15 July 1996	242-43	Statement by Minister regarding incident of massacre of people in Bhojpur district of Bihar
1036.	26 July 1996	199-207	Election to Committee on Official Language

1	2	3	4
1037.	1 August 1996	289-91	Statement by Minister regarding alleged misbehaviour with Smt. Subhawati Devi (MP) by the DIGP, Gorakhpur (UP) and alleged threat to her life
1038.	2 August 1996	208	Special Mention regarding misconduct of Ferozabad District Collector with the member of Parliament
1039.	27 August 1996	238-42	Statement by Minister regarding Amarnath Yatra
1040.	29 August 1996	380	Discussions under Rule 193 regarding loss of lives due to heavy rains and landslides during Amarnath Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir
1041.	6 September 1996	262	Special Mention regarding demand of security arrangements for Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, MP
1042.	12 September 1996	465-68	Statement by Minister regarding steps taken to relieve aftermath of the Amarnath tragedy
1043.	13 September 1996	247-48	Special Mention regarding the decision of the Government to appoint Shri Nitish Sengupta, a retired senior IAS officer as an Inquiry Officer to inquire into the Amarnath tragedy
1044.	3 December 1996	309, 323	Special Mention regarding Steps to protect oil pipe lines as well as other important installations of Oil India Ltd., Indian Oil Corporation and AOC in Assam
1045.	3 December 1996	334-38	Statutory Resolutions regarding approval of Proclamation by President in relation to the State of Uttar Pradesh

1	2	3	4
1046.	5 December 1996	299-300	Statutory Resolutions regarding approval of Proclamation by President in relation to the State of Uttar Pradesh
1047.	5 December 1996	249-51	Special mention regarding terrorist attack at Kulgam town, near Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir
1048.	17 December 1996	297-99	Special Mention regarding indiscriminate killing of non-tribals, mostly Kukis by Naga tribals in Kalyanpur in Tripura
1049.	17 December 1996	302	Special Mention regarding the enquiry Report on Amarnath Yatra mishap
1050.	18 December 1996	276-84	Government Bill regarding Uttar Pradesh State Legislature (Delegation of Powers)
1051.	19 December 1996	252, 254	Statement by Minister regarding situation arising out of the Allahabad High Court judgment regarding imposition of President's Rule in Uttar Pradesh
1052.	19 December 1996	257	Special Mention regarding resentment among the people due to killing of four persons by the police in a fake encounter in Gaziabad, Uttar Pradesh
1053.	19 December 1996	288-89, 308-09	Statement by Minister regarding situation arising out of the Allahabad High Court judgment regarding imposition of President's Rule in Uttar Pradesh
1054.	19 December 1996	310-11	Special Mention regarding Uttar Pradesh State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Bills
1055.	20 December 1996	283	Government Bill regarding Vice-President Pension, by Shri Indrajit Gupta

1	2	3	4
1056.	20 December 1996	269-71, 272-78	Calling Attention regarding reported stripping of a woman in Mandya District, Karnataka leading to suicide
		1997	
1057.	24 February 1997	336	Discussion under Rule 193 regarding situation in Uttar Pradesh
1058.	13 March 1997	295	Statement by Minister regarding incidents/issues relating to Uttar Pradesh
1059.	13 March 1997	295, 318	Statutory Resolutions regarding approval of continuance in force of Proclamation by President in respect of the State of Uttar Pradesh
1060.	20 March 1997	235, 238-43	Statement by Minister regarding release of persons still under detention under erstwhile Terrorist & Disruptive Activities Act, 1987
1061.	11 April 1997	156-60	Motion of Confidence in the Council of Ministers
1062.	6 May 1997	462-63	Budget (General), 1997-1998
1063.	7 May 1997	233-34	Question of Privilege
1064.	13 May 1997	427-28	Statement by Minister regarding incidents during Bihar Bandh
1065.	13 May 1997	448-49	Special Mention regarding demand for strict action against the guilty police personnels involved in assault of a citizen during visit of the Prime Minister in Delhi
1066.	15 May 1997	255, 258	Statement by Minister regarding kidnapping of the relatives of Shri Prabhu Dayal Katheria, MP

1	2	3	4
1067.	23 July 1997	318, 327	Statement by Minister regarding desecration of statute of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and police firing in Mumbai
1068.	29 July 1997	451-59	Motion regarding serious situation arising out of the recent developments in Bihar
1069.	1 August 1997	246-47	Statement by Minister regarding issue of seeking Army Assistance by the CBI for execution of a warrant of arrest in Patna
1070.	14 August 1997	240-43	Statement by Minister regarding abduction of Sanjoy Ghosh—a social worker in Assam
		1998	
1071.	23 March 1998	1	Observance of silence
1072.	23 March 1998	2	References regarding the list of members elected to Lok Sabha laid on the Table
1073.	23 March 1998	1	Welcome to members of new Lok Sabha by Speaker *Pro Tem*
1074.	23 March 1998	18	Nomination of Panel of Chairman
1075.	24 March 1998	1	Members sworn
1076.	24 March 1998	6-8	Election of Speaker
1077.	24 March 1998	24-25	Felicitations to the Speaker
1078.	28 March 1998	76-81	Motion of Confidence in the Council of Ministers
1079.	27 May 1998	291-98	Discussion under Rule 193 regarding recent nuclear tests in Pokharan
1080.	28 May 1998	342, 347	Discussion under Rule 193 regarding recent nuclear tests in Pokharan
1081.	2 June 1998	408-10	Special Mention regarding budgetary hike in urea price

1	2	3	4
1082.	8 June 1998	466-67	Special Mention regarding demand of a statement regarding construction activity going on at the disputed Ram Janma bhoomi Babri Masjid site at Ayodhya
1083.	10 June 1998	240-42, 245-46, 248-49	Special Mention regarding requests to the Central Government to appeal to the Supreme Court to inquire into the incident relating to seeking the assistance of army for execution of the warrant against Shri Laloo Prasad Yadav
1084.	14 July 1998	246-48	Motion regarding suspension of members
1085.	16 July 1998	289	Special Mention regarding need to clarify the news report that the services of the armed forces are proposed to be utilized for breaking the strike of postal workers
1086.	17 July 1998	238-39	Special Mention regarding staging of a marathi play in Mumbai
1087.	21 July 1998	396-97	Regarding allegation by two Maharashtra Ministers about death threats and manhandling by ruling party workers
1088.	31 July 1998	52-57	Discussion under Rule 193 regarding situation in North Eastern region due to insurgency
1089.	3 August 1998	69-76	Discussion under Rule 193 regarding recent developments affecting India's foreign policy
1090.	4 August 1998	54-56	Salary, Allowances and Pension of members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 1998
1091.	5 August 1998	53-61, 63	Motion regarding consideration of final Report of Jain Commission and Memorandum of Action taken on the Report

1	2	3	4
1092.	5 August 1998	8	Presentation of petition regarding need for reforms in the election process to prevent criminalisation and corruption
1093.	9 December 1998	410-20	Short Duration Discussion regarding atrocities committed on minorities in various parts of the country
1094.	10 December 1998	282	Statement by Government on how they intend to deal with the workers' demand and the strike
1095.	17 December 1998	245	Felicitations to the Deputy Speaker
		1999	
1096.	26 February 1999	471-80	Statutory Resolution regarding approval of the proclamation of President in relation to the State of Bihar
1097.	8 March 1999	624-25, 627	Special Mention regarding requests of the Government to allow Shri Madan Lal Khurana to make a statement on his resignation from the Cabinet
1098.	9 March 1999	435	Regarding dismissal of former Naval Chief and allegations made by him against Defence Minister
1099.	12 March 1999	351-60	Motion of Thanks on the President's Address
1100.	16 April 1999	304-14, 316-23	Motion of Confidence in the Council of Ministers
1101.	20 October 1999	1	Observance of silence
1102.	20 October 1999	2	Welcome to members of new Lok Sabha by Speaker *Pro Tem*
1103.	20 October 1999	39	Nomination to Panel of Chairmen
1104.	20 October 1999	39	Resignations by members
1105.	20 October 1999	40	Members sworn

1	2	3	4
1106.	21 October 1999	1	Oath or affirmation by members of newly elected Lok Sabha
1107.	22 October 1999	1	Oath or affirmation by members of newly elected Lok Sabha
1108.	22 October 1999	1-4	Election of Speaker
1109.	22 October 1999	13-15	Felicitations to Speaker
1110.	27 October 1999	18	Felicitations to Deputy Speaker
1111.	28 October 1999	45	Presentation of petition against the move to open the Indian insurance sector to foreign companies through the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Bill, 1999
1112.	29 October 1999	81-91	Motion of thanks on the President's Address
1113.	7 December 1999	406-09	Regarding Pending Ayodhya case before Special Additional Sessions Judge
1114.	16 December 1999	253-61	Discussion under Rule 193 regarding Disinvestment Policy of Government
1115.	17 December 1999	371, 374	Discussion under Rule 193 regarding Disinvestment Policy of Government
1116.	20 December 1999	440-43	Regarding Women Reservation Bill, 1999
		2000	
1117.	6 March 2000	3-4	Obituary references
1118.	31 July 2000	416-18	Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Bill
1119.	1 August 2000	639-42	Uttar Pradesh Reorganisation Bill, 2000
1120.	2 August 2000	465-67	Statement by Minister regarding incident of killings in Jammu and Kashmir on the intervening night of 1 and 2 August 2000

1	2	3	4
1121.	3 August 2000	361-69	Discussion under Rule 193 regarding Resolution passed by Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly for Autonomy
1122.	7 August 2000	426	Regarding judicial enquiry into the recent incidents of killing of several persons including Amarnath Yatra pilgrims in Jammu and Kashmir

Sl.No.	Date	Column No.(s)	Title
1	2	3	4
		1996	
1.	15 July 1996	239-40	Regarding reported remarks made by Home Minister against President of Congress Party
2.	15 July 1996	263-65, 287-300	Incident of massacre of several people in Bhojpur District of Bihar
3.	16 July 1996	287-89, 303-05	Statutory Resolution approving the continuance in force of the Proclamation under article 356 in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir
4.	24 July 1996	332-38	Clarification on Statement by Minister: Incident of arson and massacre of people in the Bhojpur District of Bihar
5.	27 August 1996	269-73	Statement by Minister: Amarnath Yatra
6.	11 Spetember 1996	277-82	Short Duration Discussion on evolution of functioning of the Development Boards, appointed under article 371(2) of the Constitution in Maharashtra and Gujarat
7.	13 September 1996	376-83	Private Members Bill: The State of Pondicherry Bill, 1992
		1997	
8.	10 March 1997	263-64	Regarding withdrawal of all the cases pending under TADA

1	2	3	4
9.	10 March 1997	288	Regarding murder of Delhi Police Officer in Kalka Mail
10.	10 March 1997	329-42	Short Duration Discussion on deteriorating law and order situation in Uttar Pradesh
11.	13 March 1997	315, 318-19	Regarding burning to death of a rape victim in Delhi and negligence of Government hospitals
12.	21 March 1997	372-78	Clarifications on the Statement by Minister: Release of persons still under detention under erstwhile Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act, 1987
13.	14 May 1997	196-200, 284-307, 309-10	Calling Attention to matter of urgent public importance: Increasing insurgency in the North Eastern States
14.	30 July 1997	275-91	Short Duration Discussion on police firing on Dalits in Mumbai and atrocities committed on them in other parts of Maharashtra
15.	1 August 1997	347-52	Special Mentions: Resolution regarding need for creating a separate State of Chhattisgarh
16.	1 August 1997	365-68	Statement by Minister on seeking of army assistance by CBI for execution of a Warrant of Arrest in Patna
17.	4 August 1997	343-46	The Private Security Guards and Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 1994
18.	6 August 1997	228-31	Regarding whereabouts of Shri Sanjay Ghose, kidnapped by ULFA
19.	6 August 1997	377-90	Clarification on Statement by Minister on seeking of Army assistance by CBI for execution of a Warrant Arrest in Patna

INDEX

Abdul Kalam, APJ, (xv), 499
Abdullah, Farooq, 104, 107-08, 117, 121-22
Abdullah, Sheikh, 103, 107
Acts
-Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 152
-Citizenship Act, 97
-Defence of India Act, 146, 148
-Dowry Prohibition Act, 319
-Essential Services Maintenance Act, 102, 378-79
-Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA), 220, 222, 226
-Foreigners' Act, 97
-Hindu Marriage Act, 317-18, 325
-Income-tax Act, 277-78
-Industrial Disputes Act, 336, 338, 342, 369
-Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA), 148
Minimum Wages Act, 369
-Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act (MRTP Act), XXV, 73, 220, 222, 226, 270
-Passport Act, 97
-Preventive Detention Act, 130, 138-41, 148-49
-Representation of the People Act, 81
-Special Marriages Act, 317-18, 325
-Trade Unions Act, 132
Adivasis, 296-97
Adult Illiteracy, 322
Advani, L.K., 23, 72, 93, 114
Aga, Syed Ahmed, 323
Agriculture
-Agrarian reforms, 73
-Agricultural Labour, 344
-Drought, 406, 414-16
-Fair price shops, 426
-Farmers, 392, 395, 399
-Food Corporation, 423
-Food crisis, 281
-Foodgrains, 422
-Green Revolution, 399, 402, 404
-Prices of Fertilizers, 402-04
-Public Distribution System, 3, 281-82, 401-02, 417, 428, 430
-Starvation, 416
AIADMK, 520
Air Force, 454
Alarming Situation in Punjab, 151-84
Alipore, 2
All Assam Students Union (AASU), 169-70
All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), 2, 21, 30, 32, 38, 380-81, 522, 526
Alva, Joachim, 191
Alvi, Rashid, 519
Anti-hoarding operations, 401
Apartheid, 491
Armed Forces, 434
Autonomy 64, 117
Baalu, T.R., 518
Babri Masjid, 32
Backward Classes, 300, 309-10
Bahujan Samaj Party, 520
Balayogi, G.M.C., 23
Banatwalla, G.M., 148, 524
Bandaranaike, Sirimavo, 489
Banerjee, Kumari Mamta, 525
Banerjee, S.M., 250, 336, 339-40
Bardhan, A.B., 36
Barnala, Surjit Singh, 163-64
Basirhat, 2, 21

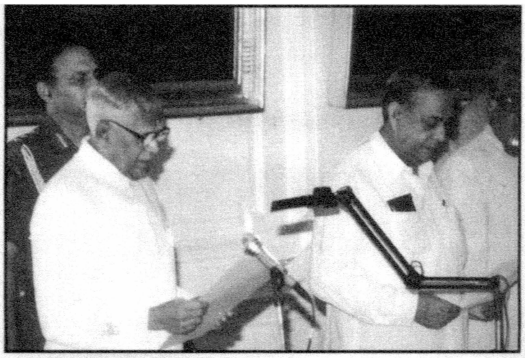
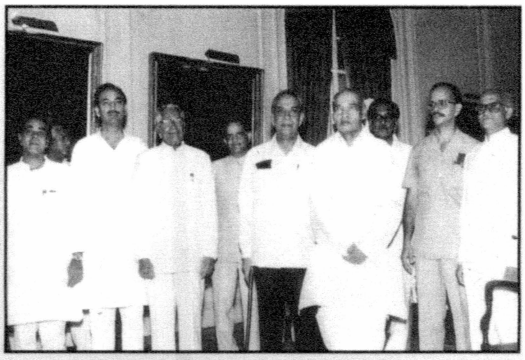
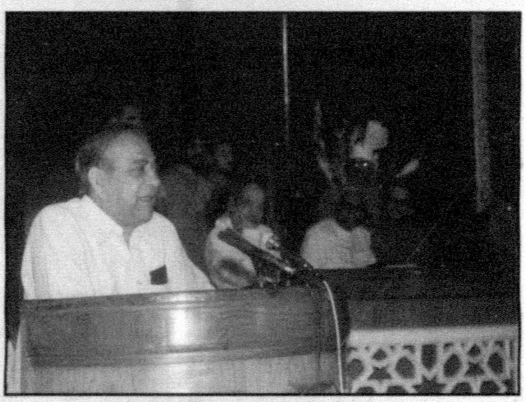
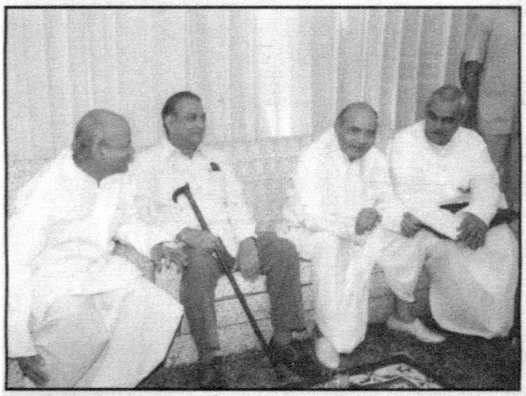
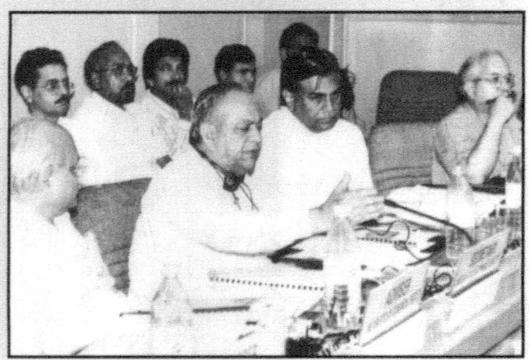
Basu, Jyotirmoy, 368, 385
Bhabha, Homi, 494
Bhagat, B.R., 26, 29, 252-53, 481
Bhandari, Sunder Singh, 92
Bharucha, Naushir, 188, 190
Bhattacharjee, Buddhadeb, 6
Bhaura, Bhan Singh, 521
Bhupesh Bhawan, 23
Bhutto, Benazir, 108
Bills
-Central Industrial Security Force (Amendment) Bill, 372
-Disturbed Areas Bill, 152
-Essential Services Maintenance (Amendment) Bill, 377
-Industrial (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 367
-Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Bill, 484
-The Anti-Apartheid Bill, 465
-The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 255
-The Constitution (Sixty-second Amendment) Bill, 56
-The Constitution (Twenty-Fifth Amendment) Bill, 285
-The Defence of India Bill, 143
-The Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 51
-The Freedom Fighters (Appreciation of Services) Bill, 45
-The Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 358
-The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Amendment Bill, 335
-The Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 350
-The International Monetary Fund and Bank (Amendment) Bill, 276
-The Madhya Pradesh Reorganization Bill, 64
-The Minimum Wages (Amendment) Bill, 343
-The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (Amendment) Bill, 270
-The National Security Bill, 148
-The Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Bill, 364
-The Police Forces (Restriction of Rights) Bill, 130
-The Preventive Detention (Continuance) Bill, 137
-The Private Security Guards and Agencies (Regulation) Bill, 135
-The Public Financial Institutions Law (Amendment) Bill, 263
-The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 56
Border Security Force (BSF), 156
Borooah, Dev Kant, 198
Bragg, Alan, 129
Brezhnev, Leonid, 470
British Broadcasting Corporation, 479-80
Buckley, James, L., 468
Business Advisory Committee, 3, 13, 33, 514
Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), 372-76
Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), 156, 159
Central Trade Unions, 368
Centre-State Relations, 67-68, 93, 183
Chakraborty, Ajay, 19
Chanana, Charanjit, 222
Chandra Shekhar, 523
Chatterjee, Somnath, 6, 82, 270, 516
Chattopadhyaya, Devi Prasad, 247
Chaudhary, Nitiraj Singh, 257
Chautala, Chaudhary Om Prakash, 525
Chavan, S.B., 328-29
Chavan, Y.B., 47, 229, 237, 240, 244-48, 373, 452, 455
Chettia, Anup, 461
Child Labour, 62
China Federation of Trade Unions, 32
Chinese Communist Party, 32
Choudhary, Saifuddin, 107, 112
Chowdhury, Moinul Haque, 368
Clinton, Bill, 460
Cotton Corporation of India, 268

Commission
-Disinvestment Commission, 200, 202-03, 206
-Election Commission, 54, 56, 58-61
-Fifth Pay Commission, 33
-Mandal Commission Report, 308, 311
-Mandal Commission, 299-300, 302, 308
-Monopoly Enquiry Commission, 141
-Planning Commission, 211, 232, 273, 443, 446
-Sarkaria Commission, 64, 67, 91, 94, 117
Communalism, 4, 84
Communist Party of India (CPI), 1, 2, 16, 19, 26, 27, 30, 33, 38, 102
Condolences, 515
Congress Party, 26, 28
Consolidated Fund of India, 203-04
Corruption, 483
Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), 271
Criminal Procedure Code, 140-41
Criminalization of politics, 4, 179-80
Crisis in Assam, 95-102, 169-70
Cultural Revolution, 32
Daga, Moolchand, 295
Dandavate, Madhu, 28, 163
Dandeker, V.N., 241
Dantwala, M.L., 241-42
Debt trap, 9
Defence of India Rules (DIR), 137-38, 141
Democracy, 57-58, 251, 261, 512
Deo, P.K., 408
Depressed Classes, 293
Desai, Morarji, 251-54, 256-57, 259, 261
Deshmukh, B.G., 273
Deshmukh, Shivaji Rao, S., 421
Dharia, Mohan, 51, 53-54, 394
Directive Principles of State Policy, 72, 286, 289, 291
Disarmament, 478
Disinvestment Policy of the Government, 200
Dock Labour/workers, 9, 20
Durrani, Major General Assad, 177
Dutt, Rajani Palme, 28
Dutta, A.K., 26
Economy
-Black Market, 418
-Black Money, 212
-Budget, 208-11, 213-14, 216-21, 223, 235, 237-38
-Disinvestment Fund, 202-03
-Economic crisis, 67
-General Budget and the Common Man, 208
-Inflation, 365
-Nationalization of Banks, 250
-Rise in Prices of Essential Commodities, 229, 234-49, 416
-Self-reliance in Oil Production, 196
-Subsidy, 282, 404
Electoral reforms, 4, 5, 20, 318
Elias, Shri Muhammed, 346
Emergency, 88, 145
ENRON, 206
Estimates Committee, 128
Ex-Andaman Political Prisoners Fraternity Association, 46
Federation of India Chambers of Commerce and Industry, 274
Fernandes, George, 111
Forward Bloc, 524
Free legal aid, 321
Galbraith, John Kenneth, 190
Gandhi, Indira, 27, 66-67, 170, 373
Gandhi, Mahatma, 79, 298
Gandhi, Rajiv, 27, 69, 83, 107, 219-20, 228
Geete, Anant Gangaram, 520
General Elections, 52
General Insurance Company, 353-54, 356-57
Ghosh, Sailesh, 198
Godse, Nathuram, 79
Gokhale, H.R., 52, 54, 288
Golaknath Case, 285
Golden Temple, 161
Gorbachev, Mikhail, 71

Gowda, H.D. Deve, 10, 11, 18, 39
Guha, Samar, 495-97
Gujral, I.K., 10, 11
Gupta, Bhupesh, 28, 47, 295
Gupta, Indrajit
-Bharat Ratna Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Outstanding Parliamentarian Award, 5, 18, 21, 24, 509-13
-Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence, 3
-Early Life, 1
-Father of the House, 2, 13, 30, 514, 524
-Gandhian philosophy, 25, 517
-Member
-Committee on Petitions, 3, 13, 33, 514
-Committee to Review Lok Sabha Secretariat Rules, 3, 514
-General Purposes Committee, 3, 13, 514
-Library Committee, 3, 514
-Parliamentary Committee, 3, 13, 20
-Peace Committee, 9
-Rules Committee, 3, 13, 514
-Standing Committee on Defence, 13, 514
-Publications
-*Capital and Labour in Jute Industry*, 5, 21, 31
-*Self Reliance in National Defence*, 5, 22, 31
-Speaker pro-tem, 2, 13, 21
-St. Stephen's College, Delhi, 11, 19, 27, 526
Gupta, Priya, 359
Gupta, Ranjit, 17
Gupta, Satish Chandra, 19
Haig, Alexander, 468
Haq, Zia-ul, 154
Harijans, 295-96
Hasina, Sheikh, 461-62
Hawke, Bob, 473-74, 476
Hizbul Mujahideen, 110
Iengar, H.V.R., 127
Indian Banks Association, 256
Indian Jute Mills Association, 384, 390
Indian National Trade Union Congress, 335, 378, 380-83
Indora, Dr. Sushil Kumar, 525
Indus Basin Development Fund, 446-47
Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), 263-65, 269
Integrated Rural Development Programme, 417
Intellectual Property Rights, 74
Inter-State Council, 5, 86-87
International
-Africa, 75
-Asia, 75
-Asian Development Bank, 503
-Bangladesh, 108, 148, 240
-Bilateral dialogue, 500
-Boundary disputes, 439
-British Council, 476
-CARICOM, 475
-Cease-fire, 433, 440, 444
-CHOGM, 472-73, 475
-CIA, 482, 493
-Cobra Missiles, 445
-Colombo Conference, 489
-Commonwealth Conference, 473
-CTBT, 457-58, 503-504
-First World War, 45
-Foreign Policy, 463, 478
-General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), 74
-Hawker-Hunter Aircraft, 128
-ILO, 320
-IMF, 9 10, 70, 74-75, 220-21, 223, 225-28, 276, 278-82
-India-China relations, 500
-Indian diplomacy, 483
-Indo-Pak Borders, 452
-Indus Water Treaty, 443-44
-International Court of Justice, 442
-International Relations, 433

-International Situation, 472
-Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), 110
-Latin Amercia, 75
-NATO, 472
-Non-aligned countries, 485
-Non-aligned Movement, 468
-Nuclear disarmament, 497-98
-Nuclear Policy, 456-57
-Pakistan, 108, 114-15, 119, 143-46, 177, 444, 450, 453, 456, 467
-Pakistani Army, 436
-Philippines, 261
-PLO, 477
-Romania, 181
-SAARC, 458
-South African National Congress, 471
-South-South Conference, 227
-Soviet Union, 71, 183
-Tamil militants, 480
-Third World Countries, 74
-United Nations, 105, 108, 189
-United States of America (USA), 74, 89, 129, 141, 209, 261
-Vietnam, 141
-World Bank, 399, 448-49
-World Health Organization, 189
Islamic Conference, 468, 474
J&K Liberation Front, 110-11
Jacob, M.M., 178-79
Jakhar, Dr. Balram, 405
Jallianwala Bagh, 151, 155
Jayewardene, Junius Richard, 479-80
Jethmalani, Ram, 466, 471
Joshi Subhadra, 250
Joshi, Manohar, 13
Kamath, H.V., 34
Karmal, Babrak, 469
Kashmir Problem, 522
Khadilkar, R.K., 364-65
Khalistan Movement, 160, 165
Khan, Gen. Ayub, 449, 453
Khrushchev, Nikita, 412
Khurana, Madan Lal, 114
King's College, 1, 11, 27, 526
Kirkpatrick, Jeane J., 467
Kosygin, Alexey, 412
Krishan Kant, 6, 526
Krishna Menon Committee, 190
Krishnamachari, T.T., 412, 510
Karunanidhi, Dr. Kalaingar, 519
Kumar, Meira, 478
Kumaramangalam, S. Mohan, 287
Kurien, Mathew, 264
Kyprianou, Syprous Achilleos, 474
Ladejinsky, Wolf, 413
Lahore Conspiracy Case, 45
Lal, Chaudhary Devi, 525
Laskar, Nihar Ranjan, 372-74
Limaye, Madhu, 28, 521
Lohia, Rammanohar, 28
Longowal, Sant Harchand Singh, 166-67
Ludhiana Resolution (1978), 171
Mahida, Narendra Singh, 127
Mahishi, Dr. Sarojini, 324
Malaviya Committee, 198
Mandela, Nelson, 493
Marx, Karl, 292
Marxism, 19, 38
Marxism-Leninism, 17
Masani, Minoo, 137, 139
Mathur, Harish Chandra, 188
Menon, V.K. Krishna, 19
Mishra, Chaturanan, 32
Mitra, Dr. Ashok, 241-42
Mitterand, Francois, 471
Modi, Piloo, 291
Mody, K.N., 210
Moynihan, Patric, 481
Mukerjee, Prof. Hirendra Nath, 28, 410
Mukherjee, Pranab, 9, 222, 225-26, 277, 385, 389-90
Mussolini, 37
Naidu, Chandrababu, 517

Naik, Ram, 207
Nanda, Gulzari Lal, 137-38
Narayanan, K.R., 6, 25, 31, 509
National Council of Applied Economic Research, 208
Nehru, Jawaharlal, 26, 27, 71, 501
Netam, Arvind, 325
Nitish Kumar, 522
Nyerere, Julius, 227
Operation Blue Star, 167-68, 170-71
Operation Rhino, 175, 178
Optimum Utilization of the Defence Allocation, 127
Pai, Nath, 34
Pal, Rupchand, 16, 374
Panda, Prabodh, 23
Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Memorial Society, 510
Pandiyan, P.H., 520
Pant, K.C., 49, 143, 146, 509
Pant, Pandit Govind Ballabh, 137
Paramilitary Forces, 60
Parliamentary Democracy, 57-58, 251, 261, 512
Patel, Chimanlal, 241
Patel, H.M., 372
Patel, P.R., 252
Patel, Sardar Vallabhbhai, 139
Patent Law, 74
Patil, Shivraj V., 457, 509
Pawar, Sharad, 521
People's War Group, 181
Police reforms, 5
Pollution, 487-88
Portilo, Louis, 276
Pradhan, Amar Roy, 523
Prakash, Ved, 143, 146
Proportional representation, 59
Public Sector
-A Strong Public Sector for Strong Economy, 187
-Bharat Aluminium Company, 65
-Bharat Heavy Electricals, 65
-Bombay High Off-shore, 196
-Coal India Ltd., 428
-Development Boards, 328, 330
-Gas Authority of India, 205-06
-Heavy Engineering Corporation, 198, 271
-Hindustan Antibiotics, 189
-Hindustan Machine Tools, 189, 191
-Hindustan Steel Limited, 454
-Liberalization, 274
-Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), 194, 258
-National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (NHPC), 205
-National Textile Corporation, 427
-National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), 205
-Nationalisation, 232-33, 240, 250, 255-56, 262
-*Navratnas*, 205
-Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC), 196-99
-Public Sector Enterprises, 4, 192
-Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), 4, 192, 200
-Public Sector, 187-88, 190, 192-94, 200-03, 206, 211, 265
-State Trading Corporation, 211
-Steel Authority of India, 200
Rajiv-Longowal Accord, 177
Rakshak II, 175
Ramaiah, Raghu, 327
Ramphal, Shridath, 475
Ranga, N.G., 224, 437
Rangarajan, C., 417
Rao, Jagannath, 484, 487
Rao, N.T. Rama, 395
Rao, P.V. Narasimha, 67, 79, 466, 473, 505
Rao, Satyanarayan, 374
Ray, Siddhartha Shankar, 163, 243
Reagan, Ronald, 463, 477
Reddi, Marri Chenna, 394
Reddy, Brahmanand, 424
Regional Boards, 330-31
Reservation, 293-94, 308-09
Ribeiro, J.F., 162
Right of Property, 318
Roy, A.K., 150
Roy, B.C., 17, 26

Roy, Biren, 26
Saint Thiruvalluvar, 518
Saksena, Shibban Lal, 45, 50
Salve, N.K.P., 286
Sangama, P.A., 385, 403
Sathe, Vasant, 301
Sayeed, Mufti, 181
Scheduled Caste, 91, 295-96, 303
Scheduled Tribe, 295, 303
Secularism, 3, 17, 57-58, 79-85, 523
Self-reliant defence system, 498
Sen, P.C., 149
Shankaranand, B., 308-10, 312-13
Shantilal Mangaldas Case, 285-86
Sharif, Nawaz, 458-59
Shastri, Lal Bahadur, 27, 436
Shastri, Prakashveer, 34
Shekhawat, Bhairon Singh, 6
Shinkre, M.P., 130-31
Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee, 166
Shiv Sena, 521
Shukla, V.C., 426
Shyam, Smt. Savitri, 326
Sikri, S.M., 170
Singh, Arjun, 79
Singh, Buta, 159
Singh, Chaudhary Charan, 217
Singh, Darbara, 152
Singh, Dr. Bright, 241
Singh, Dr. Manmohan, 67, 399
Singh, Jaipal, 187-88
Singh, Jaswant, 108, 457
Singh, Kalyan, 83-84, 92
Singh, Raghuvansh Prasad, 523
Singh, Sardar Gurubaskh, 155
Singh, Sardar Swaran Singh, 497
Singh, Shaheed Bhagat, 45, 151, 155
Singh, Vishwanath Pratap, 83, 395
Singhvi, L.M., 34
Sinha, Yashwant, 201
Situation in Jammu and Kashmir, 103-123
Social reforms, 319
Socialism, 39, 57-58
Somnath Mandir, 32
Soz, Saifuddin, 11
Spanish Civil War, 37
Stephen, C.M., 149
Subramaniam, C., 265, 407, 409, 411-12
Suraiya, 28
Tagore, Rabindranath, 25
Telugu Desam Party, 517
Tewary, K.K., 478-79
Thackeray, Bala Saheb, 521
Thatcher, Margaret, 472
Tiwari, Narayan Datt, 30
Tiwary, Pandit Dwarka Nath, 45, 49-50
Trade Union Movement, 14, 515-16
Trudeau, Pierre, 473
ULFA, 461
Unnikrishnan, K.P., 197-98
Vajpayee, Atal Bihari, 6, 77, 79, 229-30, 296, 456, 458, 496
Varma, Ravindra, 101
Venkataraman, R., 96, 99, 211, 216, 218-19, 223, 228, 280, 425
Viswanathan, G., 54
Voluntary Disclosure Scheme, 279
Vote of Confidence in the Council of Ministers, 66
Wanchoo Committee Report, 240
Wanchoo, H.N., 116
Women
-Committee on Status of Women, 317
-Creches and nurseries for working women, 322
-Empowerment of women, 314
-Reservation of Seats for Women, 318
-Resolution on International Women Year, 314-27
-Women MPs, 318
-Women's Rights, 323
-Working Mothers, 321

Workers
-Bonus, 351-57, 364-66
-Compensation, 361-62
-Indian Labour Conference, 341, 347, 369
-Indian Sugar Mill Owner's Association, 427
-Industrial Tribunal, 352
-Jute Corporation of India, 268-69
-Jute Fabrics Shippers Association, 387
-Jute Mill Workers, 16
-Minimum Wages, 320, 344-49, 418
-National Labour Conference, 378
-Tobacco Board, 392, 395-96
-Tobacco Growers, 391
World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), 2, 21, 30
Yadav, Chandrajit, 242-43
Yadav, Lalu Prasad, 32, 90, 460
Yadav, Mulayam Singh, 93, 518
Yerrannaidu, K., 517, 521
Ziang, Zhao, 479
Zia-ul-Haq, 466, 469